

HOW FARE AMERICAN YOUTH?

HOMER P. RAINEY
AND OTHERS

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HOW FARE
AMERICAN YOUTH?

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*A report to the American Youth Commission
of the American Council on Education. The
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HOW FARE AMERICAN YOUTH?

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PREFACE

AERICAN YOUTH NORMALLY WANT TO BELONG TO the team and do their part. To have a hand in the work of the world, to learn about current problems, to participate in the day-to-day common life of community and nation is the reasonable aspiration of our young folk.

There must be no widening gap between youth and society. (Youth must be led to believe that their best efforts are needed in a progressive commonwealth which will move on to levels never before attained.) The dark days of depression discontent cannot destroy the hope that there is still a place for the worker, and yet opportunity for the thoughtful, inventive and resourceful young man or woman of good will.)

But the wish alone is not enough. We must search for facts and face them. As we emerge from a lengthy period of economic doubt and despair, (it is a service to youth and to society to examine and disclose as vividly as possible the real situation of our young people. How fare American youth in jobs and job-finding, in schooling, in health, in leisure, in the family, in the church, and in all that makes for character?

The American Youth Commission seeks answers to these questions by means of thorough field studies now under way in several American communities, by means of an investigation of various aspects of the Civilian Conservation Corps, and by numerous other researches and experiments. Pending the completion of the re-

ports of these several investigations, a brief preliminary exhibit of information obtainable from other more general sources seems opportune.

This book is not a declaration of policy by the American Youth Commission. It is not a report *by* the Commission, but instead is prepared *for* the Commission, in the hope that it may be of value in its deliberations. It is an attempt to identify some of the more urgent problems of American youth and to define these problems in some detail. Before the Commission can plan programs and suggest major policies it needs to know as much as possible about the problems of youth. This volume is devoted primarily to an analysis and statement of problems and does not, except in certain instances, make constructive suggestions for dealing with the problems identified. This limitation must be frankly admitted. Under the circumstances no other alternative was possible. It is made available to the public, in the hope, however, that this presentation of problems will encourage and help individuals and groups to make constructive attacks upon them.

In its preparation I have had the assistance of five associates, four of whom are members of my staff: Arthur L. Brandon (Chapters IV and V), M. M. Chambers (Chapter VII and editorial work), D. L. Harley (Chapters I and II), and Harry H. Moore (Chapters VIII and IX). For Chapter VI, dealing with the special situation of rural youth, we are indebted to Bruce L. Melvin, Principal Research Supervisor, Rural Research Division, Works Progress Administration. Joseph K. Folsom, Professor of Sociology, Vassar College, provided most of the material for Chapter VIII.

HOMER P. RAINEY.

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HOW FARE AMERICAN YOUTH?

CHAPTER I

THE YOUTH AMONG US

THERE IS ALWAYS A "RISING" GENERATION. AT ANY given point in history the "oncoming" youth are a part of the social scene. Natural objects of solicitude, whether it be misguided or intelligent, they are often at once a source of pride and of dismay. The youth problem is perennial, as old as the race and as new as tomorrow's sunrise.

In mere numbers, the youth of America are a changing element among us from year to year. Gradual alterations in the structure of the population, arising from several sources, have long been in progress. How do our youth stand to-day, numerically, and what will be the relative position of their successors in the approaching decades?

*Americans Aged Sixteen to Twenty-Four Number
Twenty Million*

The Census of 1930 recorded 20,126,794 youth between the ages of 16 and 24 in continental United States. As immigration has ceased to be a factor of importance, and since the long-time trends in population are known, it is possible to make reasonably accurate predictions of the probable size of any age-group for a

number of years to come. The Scripps Foundation for Research in Population Problems has estimated that in 1935 the number of youth 16-24 was 21,072,000. There has thus been an increase of nearly 5 per cent between 1930 and 1935. This is in line with a general tendency of the youth population, which can be documented each decade since 1870 (when the decennial census began to give separate data for the age-group 15-24) and was certainly present before that year, probably to an even greater extent. The number of youth between these ages has shown an increase with each subsequent decade, following more or less closely the expansion of the whole population, and each increase has been a substantial one, except that for the decade in which the Great War occurred.

The Rate of Increase of the Youth Population Has Long Been Diminishing

This broad tendency of continuous growth has always had, however, a significant characteristic—it has been a diminishing tendency. Between 1870 and 1880 the youth population increased 30 per cent. In the decade 1920-1930 the increase was only 20 per cent. If the estimated increase to 1935 is duplicated in the second half of the decade, the resulting figure, 10 per cent, will be the smallest ever recorded, with the one exception already noted. In this respect, too, the youth group follows the general trend. We have become accustomed to a population expansion so rapid and so long continued that persons are often surprised to learn that not only is its end approaching, but the approximate time of that occurrence can be predicted. Population experts are in general agreement that the curve of in-

crease will have flattened out by 1970, with a total population of about 146 millions, which is 13 per cent more than the estimate for the present year—129 millions.¹

The Actual Numbers of Young Persons Will Soon Decline

We shall see a reduction in the numbers of youth before 1960, for the cause of the general slowing up of population growth is a declining birth-rate, and the full force of this circumstance will be felt in the youth group before it is reflected in the whole population. The decline in the birth-rate began after the war and has annually affected an additional age-year. The Scripps Foundation has recently published figures which enable its course to be traced through the 'teen ages, as far ahead as 1950; and by extending the straight lines along which the phenomenon moves, it is possible to predict its impingement upon the whole youth span.

There are two well-defined phases of the movement, as it overtakes each year of age: a checking of the hitherto unbroken annual rate of increase, which prefaces an eight-year period of irregular movement resulting in a net gain at about half the previous rate; then a continuous decline. The steady trend in population development has been for every year to show a larger number of persons of every age than the previous year. There now comes, however, for each age, a year in which this no longer holds. For 16-year-olds, that year was 1934, at which time they passed into the first phase of the movement just described. The 19-year-olds are at present

¹ See separate estimates by Louis I. Dublin and P. K. Whelpton, discussed by L. J. Reed, in "Population Growth and Forecasts." *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 188, pp. 159-66, Nov., 1936.

entering it. In 1942, the 16-year-olds will begin the steady numerical decline, which will continue without a check until 1951. During this time the higher ages will successively be overtaken by the advancing movement. In 1942 the 24-year-olds should have their increase arrested; and by 1950 the whole extent of the age span from 16 to 24 should be undergoing the period of sustained decline. It is estimated that the youth population will reach its peak in 1944, at which time those 16-24 will number approximately 21,900,000.² After this point is reached the total number of youth between those ages will fall off.

The estimated duration of this decline depends upon whether medium or low fertility rates are assumed. If the former, the decline is checked after nine years; if the latter, it continues almost without break as far as available estimates go (1950). Chart I illustrates the numerical fortunes of five-year-olds since 1900 and exhibits their future course on bases both of medium and low fertility, as estimated by the Scripps Foundation. It will be seen that 23 years after reaching its peak, the number of children of this age, estimated on a low-fertility basis, will have been reduced by 25 per cent. The curves shown may be taken as typifying those which each of the ages 16-24 will follow when they are overtaken and affected by the movement which is here described.

The sum of the foregoing is that the long-continued expansion of the general population is tapering off and will come to an end in about 20 years, and that the concomitant increase of the youth population has already

² Estimate by Bruce L. Melvin, Principal Research Supervisor, Rural Research Division, Works Progress Administration, Washington, D. C.

been broken in the lower reaches and will be reversed in seven years.

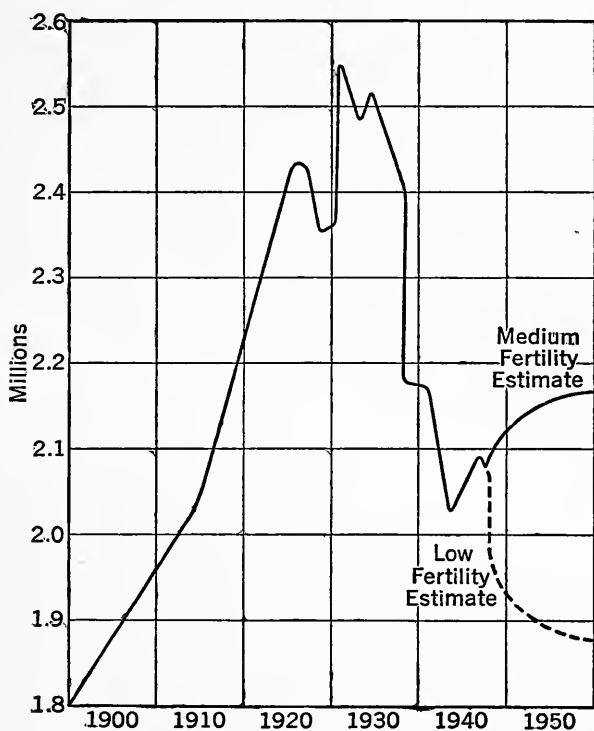


CHART I

NUMBER OF CHILDREN FIVE YEARS OF AGE FROM 1900 TO 1950, IN MILLIONS

The Proportion of Youth Varies Considerably in Different Localities

The proportion of the whole population which is comprised of youth is a matter of some moment. Two characteristics are to be particularly noted—one, that it

exhibits marked differences between sections of the country and types of residence areas; the other, that for the nation as a whole it is becoming significantly less. Some comparisons of conditions which the Census of 1930 showed to exist are given:

TABLE I

PERCENTAGE WHICH PERSONS 15-24 WERE OF PERSONS 25-59 BY GEOGRAPHIC UNITS, 1930

<i>United States</i>	<i>West</i>	<i>South</i>	<i>South Carolina</i>	<i>New York City</i>	<i>Los Angeles</i>
41.7	34.0	51.3	63.3	36.8	28.6

TABLE II

PERCENTAGE WHICH PERSONS 15-24 WERE OF PERSONS 25-59 BY TYPES OF RESIDENCE, 1930

<i>Rural Farm</i>	<i>Rural Non-Farm</i>	<i>Urban</i>
53.3	42.1	37.7

It will be seen that the variation is considerable. We have here a matter of much importance, for it is a principal factor in the great disparity in ability to support youth services which exists from one section of the country to another. In the provision of education alone, there are parts of the country where the load carried by the supporting group, reckoned simply by the proportion of young dependents to be provided for, is more than twice as heavy as in other parts. This wide contrast, in turn, gives rise to corresponding differences in the facilities actually available to youth, and our dream of equality of opportunity is shown to be far short of realization.

We Shall Have an Increasingly Adult Population

The proportion which youth 15-24 bore to persons 25-59 in 1935 was 40 per cent. In 1870 it was 57 per cent.

There has thus been a substantial decline during the last 65 years, and it is certain that this decline will be carried still further. Estimates indicate that by 1955 there will be only 30 youth 15-24 to every 100 adults 25-59.³

In recent years the virtual cessation of immigration has contributed to the tendency, since there has been little renewing of the ranks of the foreign born, and those who came to this country as youth or children are passing into adulthood. From 1920 to 1930, the percentage of foreign-born whites who were between the ages of 15 and 24 dropped from 10.7 to 7.4. Besides this factor, there are two other principal ones which will operate in the future to decrease the size of the youth group relative to the whole population.

In the first place is the actual reduction presently to occur in the numbers of youth. Since this factor will affect all ages under 25 before its force can be apparent in the general population, a decline in the relative proportions of the youth group would occur even were there no increase in the numbers of adults. In the second place, we may, in fact, look for such an increase. It will come about in the only way that the adult population can be augmented (barring a resumption of immigration), which is through an addition to the average span of life. Although the death-rate of adults has not appreciably diminished in the past 50 years, a higher proportion of people now survive to adulthood, thus tending to increase the proportionate size of that part of the population. There is no reason to assume that

³ Warren S. Thompson, "Population Growth and Housing Demand." *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*. Vol. 190, pp. 131-37, March, 1937.

this movement has spent its force; on the contrary, the rate of increase in the average expectation of life, which since 1850 has averaged a year each decade, has lately been accelerated. If a broad-gage health program were to be promoted nationally for several decades—a program bringing adequate nutrition within the reach of all the people, making it practicable for them to get the medical care they need, multiplying recreational facilities, and eliminating insanitary dwellings—we should certainly see a further marked extension of the average expectation of life. The United States Surgeon-General has recently stated that if advantage were taken of medical knowledge now available, the average length of human life could be stretched another 10 years. The number of adults, particularly elderly persons, who would be retained in the population if this were done would still further diminish the proportion which youth bear to persons of all ages. It is not impossible that a program of health education would even result in increasing the expectation of life of the adult. Dr. H. C. Sherman, of Columbia University, estimates that the average person has it in his power to add seven years to his life through the exercise of our present knowledge of nutrition. We may take it, then, that the population of the future will be increasingly adult.

The implications of this shift are important. In one way this may make solution of social problems easier, since the proportion of youthful non-productive persons to adult wage-earners will be smaller, and consequently the financial burden of caring for them relatively lighter. At the same time, however, there will certainly be more non-productive persons of advanced age, and for these, too, society has undertaken to make provision.

Youth Will Continue to Move Toward Cities

The youth population of the future will be increasingly urban. That is to say, there will be relatively fewer youth living on farms and in villages of less than 2,500. For many years there has been a steady drift away from country life, and in spite of the setback caused by the depression, there is no convincing reason to suppose that it has ceased or is likely soon to cease. In some states the proportion of urban youth was already very high in 1930—93 per cent in Rhode Island and 91 per cent in Massachusetts; but in others it remained quite low—17 per cent in North Dakota and in Mississippi. In 1900, 60 per cent of all persons lived in rural areas; in 1930, 44 per cent, and the latter figure also represented the proportion of youth alone. The farms are under a compelling necessity of decanting off their surplus population. There may be a question whether our mammoth cities have not had their day: it is probable that in many instances high costs of rental and labor will make it economical for industries to decentralize and move to areas where costs are lower. But at the most we shall only see the small or medium-sized city develop at the expense of the overlarge.

A characteristic of cities which is becoming more and more pronounced and will increase the appeal of urban life is the tendency of city workers to make their homes in suburban areas. Improved transportation facilities have greatly extended the range within which this can be done, and as cities renew themselves physically the opportunity is constantly being offered to introduce a greater measure of order and so facilitate the trend. While on the one hand city dwellers are moving out-

wards, country people are tending to converge upon the city, which increases the portion of the population coming within its sphere of influence. Thus through suburban and extra-urban growth, the relative size of the rural population is diminishing. It has been estimated that already about 80 per cent of our people live in or within an hour of cities of 50,000 inhabitants or more. This peripheral urban development has significant and, on the whole, favorable implications. It means that many more people will be brought within reach of social, cultural, educational, and health facilities, which are generally so much better in cities than in the country; and they will be afforded these opportunities without any consequent increase in overcrowding, the principal evil arising from the concentration of people within cities.

The Youth of To-morrow May Be Less Heterogeneous

The youth population of the future will exhibit a greater homogeneity, as a result of the disappearance of foreign types. This is by no means to imply that it will approximate racial unity, even of its Caucasian elements. A very long time will be required for that. But as the more recent additions to the foreign population are absorbed, cultural traits which characterize the original immigrant and set him off from his more easily adjusted children will become less apparent.

Immigration into this country was reduced to very small proportions by a series of acts of Congress begun in 1917; and since the depression not only has the number of foreigners coming here to live been negligible but it has been more than offset by emigrants returning to their native lands. In 1931 and in each subsequent

year, there were actually more people leaving the country than entering—a situation which had never before arisen. Already the proportion of the population under 25 which was born in a foreign country is very small; the great majority of young people of foreign stock belong to that class which the Census describes as Native White of Foreign or Mixed Parentage, and most of them have passed or are passing through that great agency of our common culture, the public school.

It is not, then, young people themselves who exhibit the disadvantages for youth of existing national minorities. It is rather the domestic atmosphere in which they are obliged to live. Whole sections of our large cities are peopled with immigrant families of peasant or petty-tradesman background, who will die, as they have lived, with the social standards which they brought from their obscure origins. Isolated from the currents of American life, made inaccessible to ideas by the language difficulty, resistant to change, they will persevere in their old customs and mental habits as a man will cling to an old and comfortable suit which has nevertheless become inappropriate to the climate. The young people may be very different, but their anachronistic environment is a clog to social improvement and a stumbling block in the way of attempts to work with and for the youth whose lot it is to grow up in such households.

No Great Increase of the Proportion of Negroes Seems Probable

The proportion of the youth population of the future which will be comprised of Negroes is likely to be a diminishing one. Contrary to the popular impression,

Negroes are not more prolific than whites. It is true that for the whole country their birth-rate is higher than that of white persons, but that is because the great bulk of the Negroes are concentrated in parts of the country which have the highest birth-rates for both whites and Negroes. In all sections where Negroes form a considerable element in the population, their birth-rate is less than that of the white persons of the same sections. It is true that the insanitary conditions under which Negroes often live produce an abnormally high rate of infant mortality, and that as this handicap is removed their effective rate of reproduction will tend to increase. Yet it must be assumed that any considerable improvement in the social and economic status of the Negro will have an effect upon his birth-rate similar to that everywhere evident among the white population—which is that the rate declines with a rise in status.

Will the Children of the Lower Economic Levels Dominate the Next Generation?

This suggests a third characteristic of the population, which has important implications for the youth of the future and calls for longer comment. It is frequently stated and deplored that those elements which, for lack of a better term, we sometimes call the “upper” classes are not reproducing their kind at a rate sufficient to maintain themselves, while on the other hand the “lower” classes are remarkably fertile. Thus it is estimated that in 1935 half of the babies born in the state of Michigan were to families on relief. Furthermore, with the great advances in caring for the health of children, an increasing proportion of them are surviving

among the "lower" classes. These undoubted facts give the impression that youth are to come, in greater proportion than heretofore, from the less favored strata of society. It also suggests that the class to which democracy looks for its leaders is headed towards self-extinction and that the efforts made to educate it and afford it opportunities above the common level are poorly repaid, since they seem to have created a tendency for the class itself to disappear.

It is certainly true that a deplorably large proportion of our population is found on the lowest economic level and that under a system of government which gives every adult a vote its ignorance and its lack of educational opportunity make it a ready prey for the political charlatan and constitute a real menace to democracy. But for several reasons it is probable that the likelihood of a considerable increase in this element is not so great as is sometimes represented.

Many Factors Point to a Falling Birth-Rate Among All Classes

In the first place, the birth-rate is now falling off among all classes. In 1930 there were fewer children under five than between five and nine, inclusive, which was the first time such a condition has been recorded in our history. Since mortality rates continued to decline throughout the last decade, fewer babies must have been born in the five years preceding 1930; yet neither the marriage rate nor the number of women of child-bearing age had decreased. It is likely that we have here evidence of a substantial penetration of knowledge of birth-control methods among the working classes, though there are of course other possible causes, such

as the progressive diminution in the numbers of that particularly prolific class, foreign-born persons, which has been going on since the cessation of immigration.

In the second place, the recent advance in providing economic security for working persons, especially in old age, will probably be not without effect upon the tendency of certain types of families to accumulate children. Many laboring people, particularly those of foreign birth, look upon children as a sort of old-age insurance. They are sustained through the hardships of rearing large families in crowded quarters by the thought that a few of their offspring may survive to care for them when they are no longer able to care for themselves. Now that the country has undertaken that no one need face a destitute old age and has provided that this assurance shall come not as charity but as the right of a citizen, it may be hoped and indeed expected that the investment aspect of child-bearing will come to be discounted.

In the third place, the upper middle class, which forms so valuable a part of our social structure, has in great part risen from below. If it does not maintain its ranks, others will rise to fill the gaps, for the size of this class is determined primarily by economic considerations. There are at any given time only a certain number of positions in the social order which carry an upper-middle-class salary. It might make for stability if replacements could always be effected from within the group, but it would tend to crystallize class distinctions and to abolish the alleged privilege of climbing upward which has been so widely advertised as the heritage of every American. Filled, however, these posts will be,

in one way or another, and therefore the failure of the persons who at present constitute the upper middle class to maintain their numbers does not necessarily mean that class will become extinct. Certainly it would be a mistake to think it capable of increasing itself indefinitely by an internal expansion such as the lower classes have hitherto been able to contrive. To assume that it could do so and still remain upper middle class is to ignore the economic foundation of its existence.

*A Declining Birth-Rate Does Not Necessarily Imply
Moral Decay*

We must get rid of the idea that this class is giving evidence of some sort of moral infirmity in not choosing to be prolific of children. Its choice is the plain and logical result of a conflict between the educational and cultural advantages which it enjoys and the domestic circumstances which modern urban conditions force upon it. The seat of the difficulty frequently is that our complex social life of to-day affords young married people so many interesting and even constructive and socially commendable ways of occupying their free time that unless they have an especial desire for children they are likely to be content with one or two, or even to leave the continuation of the race altogether to those who feel they have a particular talent in that direction. But their motive is not necessarily a selfish one. They may be equally or primarily actuated by an unwillingness to call into existence children to whom they cannot give advantages which we now look upon as essential. If city apartments are not suited for family life, and if parents, though moderately well off, cannot

afford more suitable quarters, much less to employ the help which would be necessary to maintain them, then parents can hardly be blamed for deciding to limit their families. Not to do so would be to lower their own standard of living and to give their children an environment below what they have come to regard as an acceptable minimum.

Checking of Population Increase May Result from Heightened Sense of Social Obligation

There is no evidence that education and culture tend in themselves to inhibit the desire for parenthood. People in the highest income brackets, where these influences may be presumed to be strongest, still reproduce their kind at an adequate rate. Such people can afford to provide a proper environment for children and can secure trained assistance to lighten the burden of the mother-housekeeper. But the upper-middle class young married couple, while well aware of the unsatisfactory nature of their present social environment, can do little to alter it; and it is not to be wondered at if they are most often impressed by the futility of burdening themselves with children whom they would not be able to bring up as they would like their children to be brought up. Such an attitude reflects a real sharpening of the social consciousness, rather than the reverse.

Housing Conditions Are a Crucial Element, and Expansion of Education and Other Social Services is Essential

The problem of equalizing differential birth-rates is essentially an economic one, and it will not be solved by

laying a barrage of propaganda of the patriotic-duty type upon the less prolific group, a measure which has been tried in other countries without marked success. What is required is an expansion of education and a two-way economic improvement. The high rate of increase of the laboring classes can be diminished by a downward extension of education—not merely of knowledge of birth-control (they have that already), but education designed to improve their social standards and especially to raise their idea of what constitutes minimum acceptable conditions of family life. A substantial economic improvement in the status of these classes should accompany this bettered education, and if it does not accompany it, it is bound in some measure to follow as a result of the demand which will have been created. The second step will be to extend this improvement upward into the classes whose delinquency is now deplored. What this group needs is not so much an increase in wages as an increase in the services which society will provide, if necessary, through its agent, the government. Housing projects in this country as in most countries have so far been designed only for the benefit of the lower income groups. But if the present incumbents of the middle classes are to be induced to maintain their numbers, they must be enabled to provide their families with housing which is as adequate by their standards as model tenements are by those of less fortunate people. Such aids to the young mother as nursery schools must also be made available for all, though so far they, too, have been treated chiefly as a form of relief for the poor only. By measures of this kind we can avoid whatever danger lies in a continuance of the existing disproportion be-

tween rates of reproduction at various social levels of the population. We shall at the same time be providing the youth of to-morrow with a better world in which to live.

CHAPTER II

YOUTH AND JOBS

WHEN ALL YOUTH BETWEEN THE AGES OF 12 AND 24 are considered, the question of jobs takes two opposing forms. There is a minimum age at which the employment of youth becomes socially justifiable, and we should regard it as an obligation to prevent young people below that age devoting part of the most formative period of their lives to premature efforts to make money. On the other hand, with youth beyond that age, the concern is rightly to see that they have a chance to work and earn a livelihood.

The Public Duty to Protect Children from Industrial Exploitation Is Admitted, but Inadequately Discharged

The duty of the government to prohibit the industrial and commercial employment of children during school hours has been recognized by every state except one. In no state, however, has a limit higher than the age of 16 been set. Yet there is general agreement among those who have studied the subject that some control must be exercised beyond this point if youth are to be kept from engaging in hazardous and unhealthful occupations. We have had one great and strikingly successful attempt to deal with this problem on a national scale—the N.R.A. codes.

It is not known how many children 14 and 15 years

old were employed when, in 1933, the N.R.A. codes were adopted, with their minimum employment age of 16 years, and in some instances 17 and 18, but the result was practically to effect that elimination of children from industry which social workers and advanced legislators had tried for decades to bring about. In manufacturing and mechanical occupations, the number of employed children dropped from more than 20,000 in 1929 to less than 100 in 1934, the only full year in which the codes were operative. There is every reason to believe that the codes came just in time to forestall a rise in juvenile employment which would ordinarily have accompanied improved business conditions. The whole course of child labor shows a quick responsiveness to fluctuations in general prosperity; and what otherwise would have happened to children under 16 can easily be imagined from the recent trend among 16- and 17-year olds. After 1929, employment of all children experienced a rapid decline; but in 1932 the fall of the 16- and 17-year olds was checked, and since then their employment has been rising.

When the codes were rendered invalid, the 14- and 15-year olds followed suit. During the 12 months of 1936 there was an increase of 182 per cent in the number of work certificates issued to them over the number granted in the preceding 12 months. In the seven months following the invalidation of the N.R.A., 12,000 children of these ages secured industrial employment. It is true that a total of this size is not large in comparison with the thousands of children who continue their education until they become 16, but, as the United States Children's Bureau points out, "The fact that such an increase could take place during a period when

there was no scarcity of adult labor, and immediately following the experience under the N.R.A. that demonstrated the practicability of eliminating child labor altogether, is of great significance to all who have at heart the welfare of the growing generation. As industrial conditions continue to improve, there is grave danger that children will again be drawn into industry in as large numbers as before the depression." Employers who are voluntarily adhering to the provisions of the defunct codes are now at a serious disadvantage in competing with those who decline to recognize such standards except under compulsion.

Nation-Wide Action Is Essential to Abolish the Evil of Child Labor

The present legal situation regarding the prohibition of child labor is highly unsatisfactory. Not only do the state laws vary, but many kinds of work in which children engage are not regulated at all and are characterized by long hours, low wages, and poor working conditions. It is clear that nothing less than a national policy can be relied upon to protect children from the affinity which they are certain to develop for the industrial magnet as the voltage is stepped up. Even a blanket prohibition of employment for those under 16 would not provide sufficient safeguards. The Children's Bureau has estimated that approximately 50,000 16- and 17-year-old youth were removed from hazardous occupations by the operation of the codes. For two years, now, industry has again been at liberty to make use of these youth, and there is little doubt that large numbers of them have returned.

The public conscience has been quickening of late in

the matter of child labor, and it is likely that we shall soon see this evil abolished once and for all. The proposed amendment to the Constitution, which gives Congress power to regulate the employment of children to the age of 18, has been adopted by 28 states and requires only eight more. It is strongly to be hoped that this section of the youth problem will not long remain one which we must admit our inability to cope with.

Youth of Employable Ages Suffer from a Dearth of Suitable Jobs

Stranded as we are between two Census periods, no one can say how many gainfully employed youth the country contains. In 1930 those between 16 and 24 who were ordinarily gainfully occupied numbered 11 million. In 1935 less than eight million were estimated to be at work.¹ There had been a decrease of approximately 30 per cent since 1930. Exact figures exist for two states, Massachusetts and Michigan, where censuses were taken in January, 1934, and 1935, respectively. In Massachusetts, the number of employed youth 16-24 was found to be 38 per cent less than the number reported in 1930, though all youth of those ages were 14 per cent more numerous than at the time of the last decennial Census.² In Michigan all youth 15-24 had decreased 3.8 per cent, and employed youth 46 per cent.³

¹ *Estimate by Committee on Youth Problems of the U. S. Office of Education, 1935.*

² *Report on the Census of Unemployment in Massachusetts as of January 2, 1934*, p. 14. Massachusetts Department of Labor and Industries, 1935. (Labor Bulletin No. 171.) 202 pp.

³ *Age, Sex, and Employment Status of Gainful Workers in Five Types of Communities*, p. 22. Lansing: State Emergency Welfare Relief Commission, 1936. (Michigan Census of Population and Unemployment Statistics, First Series.) 35 pp.

For the country as a whole, the conjectured flat decrease in the employment of youth took place in the face of a 5 per cent increase in the population 16-24; thus, reduced to a basis of equal numbers, 30 per cent is an underestimate for the drop.

Youth Are Not Receiving a Share of Available Work Proportionate to Their Numbers

There is no doubt that in recent years the ratio of employed youth to all employed persons has been less than what the size of the "employable" youth group would suggest is a fair figure. The following simple tabulation, based on data obtained in three states where employment censuses have been taken since 1930, brings this fact out clearly:

TABLE III

PROPORTION WHICH YOUTH CONSTITUTED OF ALL EMPLOYABLES AND ALL EMPLOYED, THREE STATES, 1934-35

<i>State</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Age of Youth Group</i>	<i>Proportion of Employable Youth to All Employables</i>	<i>Proportion of Employed Youth to All Employed</i>	<i>Discrepancy</i>
Massachusetts	1934	16-24	21%	18%	$\frac{1}{4}$ th
Michigan	1935	15-24	20%	16%	$\frac{1}{5}$ th
Pennsylvania ⁴	1935	15-24	25%	20%	$\frac{1}{5}$ th

It is apparent that the privilege of working for one's living is unequally distributed between youth and

⁴ *Unemployment in Pennsylvania, State Summary*, p. 9. Harrisburg: State Emergency Relief Administration, 1935. (Bulletin No. 69, Unemployment Series.) 25 pp. mimeo.

adults. Whatever the opportunities for employment may be, youth have not been receiving a proportionate share of them. This is not to imply that there exists among employers an animus against young persons in search of jobs. They cannot be blamed for preferring qualified workers; and many of the youth listed by census takers as "employable" have in fact hardly any qualification for employment except a willingness to accept it. They show too often even an inability to locate employment opportunities when there is good reason to believe they exist in the community. The question, nevertheless, presents itself whether, aside from any measures that may be taken to increase employment, it is socially sound to allow the continuance of the present unequal distribution of job opportunities between young and older workers. Ways must be found to make young persons employable in the wider sense, and we must give them such assistance that they will be able to compete on equal terms for opportunities that do exist.

*The Depression Has Produced a Large Crop of Square
Pegs in Round Holes*

There is a general belief that the depression has caused many young persons to seek kinds of work which before would not have appeared acceptable to them. Everyone knows of instances of high-school graduates who have run elevators, waited on tables, or performed other monotonous, menial, and only slightly remunerative tasks. What statistical evidence is available indicates that this common impression is well founded and that such a tendency does, indeed, exist. Of 3,000 out-of-school youth, 12-22, in Houston, who were asked what effect the depression had had upon them, 42 per

cent said it had caused them to take work which they would not otherwise have considered.⁵

The proportion of employed youth who do simple manual labor or other work of an unskilled nature is probably larger than is commonly realized. In a recent survey of representative Pennsylvania youth of about 20 years of age, it was found that nearly 50 per cent of the 5,000 who were employed were doing work of this description.⁶ A Connecticut survey of high-school graduates lists 18 per cent of employed boys as in unskilled occupations. Add those in factories, and it appears that nearly 40 per cent of boys who had graduated from the high schools of this state during the depression and were employed in 1934 are included in those two categories.⁷

Another occupational field which has accommodated greatly increased numbers of youth during the depression is domestic and personal service. Many girls have been glad to take housework at very low pay, and reports come in of high-school graduates who are working in homes for \$1.50 a week and living expenses. The proportion of employed girls 16-24 who in recent years have been engaged as waitresses, housemaids, etc., is very large—45 per cent in Denver, for instance. Among youth with a high-school education, the proportion, though smaller, is still surprising considering that in better times few graduates went into such work. From an annual survey of all the Minnesota high-school

⁵ *A Report of a Survey of Youth Not in School*, p. 18. Houston: Houston Public Schools. (Research Bulletin No. 8605.) 34 pp. mimeo.

⁶ Harlan Updegraff, *Inventory of Youth in Pennsylvania; Preliminary Draft*, p. 10. Washington: American Youth Commission of the American Council on Education. 115 pp. mimeo.

⁷ *Survey of Recent High School Graduates in Connecticut, Graduates of Twenty-Eight High Schools, 1931-34 Inclusive*, p. 67. Hartford: State Department of Education, 1936. 105 pp. mimeo.

graduates of the previous year it appears that in 1935, 19 per cent of employed female graduates of 1934 were working as domestics (not at home), and that an additional 7.5 per cent were waitresses, making 26.5 per cent in both kinds of service.⁸ For 1936 the comparable percentages have declined somewhat, though before that date there had been increases for each depression year. This indicates that with the expansion of employment opportunities, which began to be appreciable in 1936, the better educated youth are turning away from domestic and personal service; it is possible that they only resorted to it out of necessity. Indeed, many girls when interviewed have said that they were just doing housework until they could find more desirable employment.

*Many More Youth Desire to Enter Professional Work
Than Can at Present Be Accommodated*

A survey made in 1932 of young people 16-24 in nine rural townships of Ohio showed that 29 per cent of them wished to enter professions; for girls alone the percentage was 41.9.⁹ In Indianapolis, in 1935, over 5,000 youth 16-24 were asked what occupations they preferred. Thirty-two per cent of them named work which was classed as professional, or executive, or proprietary, or managerial, or supervisory.¹⁰ Among 4,000

⁸ T. J. Berning and Margaret Wulff, "The Status of the June, 1934, High School Graduates One Year After Their Graduation, June, 1935," *Minnesota Schools*, Vol. 2, pp. 22-27, Sept.-Oct., 1935.

⁹ C. E. Lively and L. J. Miller, *Rural Young People 16 to 24 Years of Age, A Survey of the Status and Activities of 300 Unmarried Individuals in Nine Ohio Townships*, p. 19. Columbus: Ohio State University, 1934. 28 pp. mimeo.

¹⁰ *Indianapolis Youth Survey*, p. 64. Indianapolis: Governor's Commission on Unemployment Relief, 1935. 96 pp. mimeo.

boys 16-24 in Newark, New Jersey, the percentage was 37.¹¹ An even larger proportion of high-school graduates look forward to preparing themselves for work in the professions. Forty-six per cent of the 1933 graduates in Milwaukee named professional occupations as those which they would like to follow.¹² Such youth have, of course, acquired some foundation for professional training and can with reason aspire to build upon it. Yet in 1930 only 6.7 per cent of all persons having gainful occupations were in the professional class. It is true that under ideal conditions the number of doctors, nurses, teachers, etc., which the country might usefully employ would certainly be much larger than it now is; nevertheless, there is little present possibility that any considerable proportion of the vast numbers of youth who desire to obtain such jobs will find them. A numerical estimate of the current situation has been attempted by Professor Harold F. Clark, of Columbia University. He judged that 400,000 youth leaving school in 1936 had chosen to go into professions, that 200,000 actually attempted to enter a profession, and that 87,500 succeeded.¹³ It will be small comfort for the great majority who failed to know that he believes two and a half times as many should have entered professions as did.

¹¹ *Coming of Age in Essex County, an Analysis of 10,000 Interviews with Persons 16-24 Years of Age, Preliminary (For Private Circulation)*, p. 63. Newark: Office of Essex County Superintendent of Schools and University of Newark Research Center, 1937. 126 pp. mimeo.

¹² *Survey of Employment and School Status of Milwaukee High School Graduates—Class of June, 1933*, p. 6. Milwaukee: Milwaukee Vocational School, 1934. 29 pp. mimeo.

¹³ Harold F. Clark, "Exploring Occupational Trends," *Occupations*, Vol. 14; pp. 766-72, May, 1936.

*The Higher Types of White-Collar Work Also Exercise
a Disproportionate Attraction for Youth*

Non-professional white-collar jobs of the more ambitious kind do not offer a prospect much more favorable. We are not likely again to see an increase of 112 per cent in insurance agents and 140 per cent in stock brokers, such as occurred between 1920 and 1930. Neither can encouragement honestly be given the youth who aspires to fill a managerial or supervisory position, even though he may be willing to start at the bottom and work up. The business-man's gospel that there is always room at the top, while a convenient peg upon which to hang sermons of industry and thrift, is hardly even remotely applicable to modern industrial employment. In "Middletown" back in the booming twenties, it was found that the opportunities for promotion to supervisory positions, which developed in the course of a year among the whole body of 4,440 industrial workers, were six.¹⁴ The plight of the high-school-trained youth is bluntly put in the report of a survey just completed in Rochester, New York. "Those who were able to find themselves work of a professional or supervisory or managerial nature were in most instances less than one per cent of all who became employed. In other words, about one student in a hundred who leave high school for any reason eventually becomes a 'brain worker' or a 'boss.' "

¹⁴ R. S. and H. M. Lynd, *Middletown, A Study in Contemporary American Culture*, pp. 65-66. New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1929, 550 pp. \$5.

Youth Are Notably Averse to Ordinary, Hum-Drum Employment

Significant data regarding the attitude of youth toward unskilled and semi-skilled labor, a field which so many have reluctantly entered, are presented by various surveys. When Indianapolis youth 16-24 were asked what occupations they would prefer, the combined number citing manufacturing, factory work, and laboring was less than 3 per cent. Some particularly striking comparisons have been made between attitudes toward domestic employment and the extent to which such work is actually accepted. In the Detroit study of out-of-school boys and girls 16-24 (1934), it was found that although 16 per cent of the jobs which the youth had filled since leaving school were in domestic service, the portion indicating a preference for housework was negligible—slightly over one per cent. According to the report, the general attitude is expressed by one girl who said, "I get enough of that at home"; and another who said, "I would do anything except housework. I hate that." ¹⁵

Recent attempts to determine the employed youth's attitude toward his job disclose much reluctant acceptance of distasteful work. In Denver, in 1935, over 1,000 youth 16-24 who were in full-time employment were asked whether their work was the kind they desired; the number who said it was not reaches the astonishing proportion of 71 per cent.¹⁶ As matters now stand, if young

¹⁵ Rachel Stutsman, *What of Youth Today?*, p. 45. Detroit: Public Schools, Department of Curriculum and Research, 1935. 232 pp. mimeo. \$1.

¹⁶ E. T. Halaas and E. A. Zelliott, *Survey of Youth in Denver, Summer of 1935*, p. 7. Denver: University of Denver, 1936. 11 pp.

people are to alter their views on the acceptability of many kinds of work, it will be for the most part under pressure of economic necessity. Yet the mental conflict for the individual and the economic stress for society which any such process of forcible alteration will necessarily entail are equally undesirable. On all sides we can see vocational aspirations shrinking as employment experience accumulates. Youth who have never worked express more of a preference for "high-brow" and professional occupations than do youth who have had even moderate experience (a fact documented by recent surveys). That the mere state of having a job can work this change is striking evidence of the visionary attitude toward employment which, by default of proper measures, we allow young people to acquire. How much better for all concerned if realism were implanted at the start.


Stratification of Society Along Occupational Lines Is Not Rigid, but It Should Be Further Reduced

In America no kind of occupation is necessarily inconsistent with decent living conditions. We have definite evidence of this from a survey in Pennsylvania recently completed by the American Youth Commission of the American Council on Education. The homes of 6,000 youth were rated according to a standard scale for estimating social and economic status and compared with the occupations of the fathers (ranked from unskilled labor, at the lower end, to the higher professional and executive occupations, at the upper end), in order to test the presupposition that the homes in which the father's occupation had the lowest score would also have the lowest, or nearly the lowest, social-

economic rating. To quote the report, the result "shows conclusively the error in such a presupposition. The positive relationship between the occupations of fathers and the social-economic standing of the home is not so strongly marked as to preclude wide differences within each occupation. No matter how low a man's occupation may be, his home may contain elements that rank far above it and give to the youth growing up within it a wholesome background that enters intimately into the make-up of his knowledge of life, his habits, and his ideals."

It Will Be Necessary to Raise the Status of Many Occupations

One cannot very well blame young people for wishing to avoid drudgery and poorly paid, monotonous, repetitious tasks. And the expedient of limiting their aspirations by restricting access to secondary education would be perilous in a democracy and is unthinkable. The solution, then, must lie in raising the educational and economic status of those to whom fall the ordinary, unexciting, necessary tasks upon the performance of which society depends. Working conditions will have to be improved, wages increased, security of employment provided for. When these things are done, the objection to manual labor and other unskilled work will in large measure have disappeared, and any considerable feeling against them which may remain will be simply an irrational retention of the ill favor which they have so long merited. If any such residuum exists, it must be the business of education to remove it.



*Employed Youth Receive Modest Wages at Best and
Frequently None at All*

While there are a number of things about a youth's job more important than the immediate return which it brings him in money, yet this consideration is not negligible. Among the most favored class of employed youth 16-24—those in cities—the median wage is generally in the neighborhood of \$15 a week. In rural areas, the cash incomes of youth are very low. Over two-thirds of 600 employed youth 16-24 in Jasper County, Indiana, received from \$5.00 to \$9.00 a week in 1935.¹⁷ In five Connecticut townships, the average weekly sum earned by 200 youth 16-25 working away from home was \$4.68.¹⁸

Although at best these petty incomes seem barely sufficient to provide for the personal wants of an unmarried youth living at home, and the lower rates of pay can hardly be supposed to do even that, their general inadequacy becomes impressive when it is known that the majority of youth help to support their families. Of 6,578 employed high-school graduates in Connecticut aged 18 to 21 in 1934, over 75 per cent were contributing to the family budget out of their meager earnings.

The proportion of youth who work without wages is surprisingly large. In Indianapolis in 1935, 43 per cent

¹⁷ *Jasper County Youth Survey, a Report of the Situation and Needs of Representative Jasper County Youth between the Ages of 16 and 25*, p. 17. Indianapolis: Governor's Commission on Unemployment Relief, 1935. 24 pp. mimeo.

¹⁸ A. J. Brundage and M. C. Wilson, *Situations, Problems, and Interests of Rural Young People 16-25 Years of Age, Survey of Five Connecticut Townships, 1934*, p. 15. Washington: U. S. Department of Agriculture, 1936. (Extension Service Circular 239.) 47 pp. mimeo.

of 3,800 employed youth 16-24 were receiving no pay; in Dayton, 26 per cent of 3,600.¹⁹ In Breathitt County, Kentucky, only 13 youth were reported as receiving wages, though 122 were doing some sort of work.²⁰ Most youth working without pay are employed at home. The Indianapolis and Dayton surveys show that approximately 90 per cent of youth so employed receive no wages.

Evil Effects Come from the Small Earning Power of Youth

It is unnecessary to enlarge upon the mischievous results of the lack of a steady income, even a modest one, among young persons of working age. The feelings of disappointment and frustration aroused by inability to participate in almost every activity involving expenditure are evident. In particular, lack of money narrows the recreational field. Commenting upon this point, the report of a Detroit survey says: "It practically eliminates the movies, which appear to be one of the most popular forms of entertainment among youth. It restricts social activities where clothes frequently are an all-important consideration to young people. It limits or eliminates the use of automobiles, either as a means of recreation or as a means of transportation to parks, playgrounds, and the country where other recreational opportunities would be available." It has been plausibly suggested that insufficient spending money is a large contributing factor to the increasing incidence of crime

¹⁹ *Youth Census, Preliminary Recapitulation*, p. 10. Dayton: City Schools, 1935. 33 pp. mimeo.

²⁰ *Programs for Which Out-of-School Young People in Breathitt County, Kentucky, Are Asking*, p. 12. Jackson: Office of the County Schools, 1935. 15 pp. mimeo.

among youth. The great proportion of auto thefts which are committed by young persons, primarily for "recreational" purposes, is significant in this connection. It seems highly probable that many criminal acts have their origin in the thwarting of youth's natural desire to acquire "purchasing power."

Youth Constitute a Third of All Unemployed. Forty Per Cent of Employable Youth Have Been Unable to Find Work

Within the eight-year age span from 16 to 24 are comprised approximately a third of all unemployed persons. A period covering a fifth of the average working lifetime thus contains nearly twice that portion of the unemployed. Further, a substantial part of youth reckoned as employed really work only part of the time. From a fifth to a fourth of "employed" youth, and in some cities as high as a third, appear to be in this class. The point is an important one; though part-time work may furnish pocket money, and in some instances even maintenance, it is seldom that a youth can be considered vocationally adjusted until he has a suitable full-time job.

An analysis of the several regional and many local surveys made between 1933 and 1936 suggests that approximately 40 per cent would be a reasonable estimate for the number of employable youth 16-24 who during the depression were available for employment, desirous of obtaining it, and yet did not find any. The Pennsylvania state survey (1934) indicated a percentage of 45 for youth in non-agricultural areas; and the same percentage emerged from the Michigan census of 1935. The majority of surveys in smaller areas were of cities,

and the unemployed generally ranged upwards of 40 per cent. Thus Dayton showed 40; Boston, 42; Indianapolis, 44; Detroit, 47; Denver, 53; and Newark, 57—all relating to young persons 16-24. A recent composite sample from 13 communities throughout the country, some of them rural, shows 53 per cent.²¹

*A Broad Gap Exists Between School and Employment.
Many Youth Who Have Never Had Jobs Have
Been Long Out of School*

An analysis of unemployment by single years of age gives percentages considerably higher for youth still in their 'teens. In New York City, nearly four-fifths of youth 16 years old, out of school and wanting work (there are estimated to be 24,000 of them), have been unable to find it.²² In other areas the percentages are less, but, in every case of which we have record, above two-thirds. In immediately succeeding ages the unemployed, though fewer, still represent in most instances a majority; it is not until 20 is reached that they subside to the level of the average for the whole group.

Some portion of unemployed youth is, of course, composed of those who have had jobs but lost them, and this portion increases rapidly with advancing years. There can be little doubt, however, that among youth of younger ages the greater part of those seeking work have never been regularly employed since leaving school. For example, of 200,000 Pennsylvania youth under 20 who were seeking work in 1934, 71 per cent

²¹ Carl A. Jessen and H. Clifton Hutchins, *Community Surveys*, p. 32. U. S. Office of Education Bulletin, 1936, No. 18-VI. Washington: Government Printing Office. 97 pp. 15¢.

²² *Employment and Educational Status of Young Persons, 16 to 24 Years of Age*, p. 8. New York: Welfare Council, 1935. 16 pp. mimeo.

had never been employed. There exists, then, a gap between school and the first job which is so extensive that it constitutes a major problem in the welfare of youth. Surveys in 1934 showed 56 per cent of employable youth 16 and 17 years old in Bridgeport, Connecticut, to be unemployed,²³ 60 per cent of all employable youth of those ages in the non-agricultural areas of Pennsylvania,²⁴ 63 per cent in Springfield, Ohio, and 69 per cent in the whole of Massachusetts. Chart II graphically represents the gap between school and the job disclosed by coördinated surveys of 13 communities in different parts of the country conducted in 1935 by the United States Office of Education.

Among youth seeking their first jobs, the percentage who have experienced long periods of unemployment has been consistently high. In the Connecticut study of youth who graduated from high school between 1931 and 1934 and had had from six months to two and a half years in which to secure employment, the proportion who obtained no position in that time was in some towns as high as 58 per cent. Among more than a thousand rural youth in Iowa, who had been out of school an average of three and a quarter years, 56 per cent had not held any regular position.²⁵ The seriousness of the situation disclosed by these figures will be emphasized when it is remembered that about two and a quarter million boys and girls leave school and college annually

²³ *Employment for Graduates of Educational Institutions*, p. 13. Senate Document No. 45, 74th Congress, 1st session. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1935. 14 pp. 5¢.

²⁴ *Census of Employable Workers in Urban and Rural Non-Farm Areas, Pennsylvania—1934*. Harrisburg: State Emergency Relief Administration, 1936, 69 pp. \$1.

²⁵ J. A. Starrak, *A Survey of Out-of-School Rural Youth in Iowa*, p. 9. Des Moines: Iowa State Planning Board, 1935. 54 pp. mimeo.

at different periods of the year, and that possibly two million of them seek gainful employment.

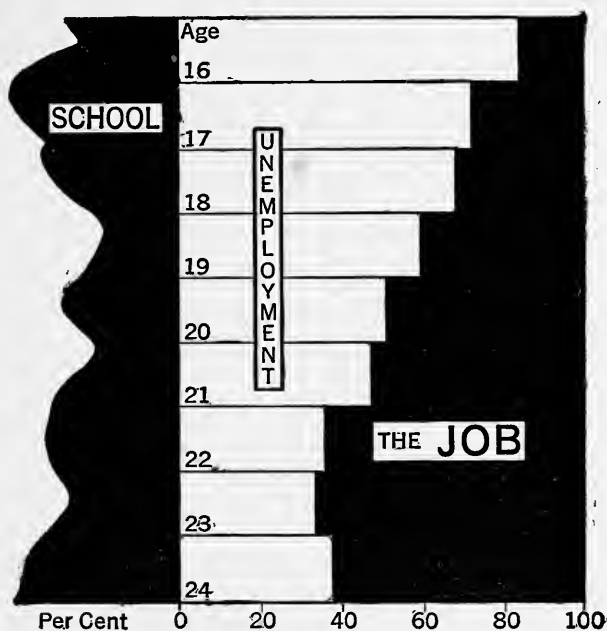


CHART II

THE GAP BETWEEN SCHOOL AND THE JOB. PERCENTAGE OF UNEMPLOYMENT AMONG OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH 16-24 BY SINGLE YEARS OF AGE, 13 COMMUNITIES, 1935

Raising the School-Leaving Age Would Help Close the Gap

There are two principal measures which could be taken to bridge this gap between school and employment, and it would be reasonable to adopt both. On the one hand the school-leaving age could be raised and, on the other, special assistance in finding a job be provided

for the youth who has just left school. In so far as the gap is caused by the immature age of the job-seekers, it could be substantially decreased by keeping youth in school until 18. Unemployment is from a fourth to a third greater at 16 than at 18. Youth released from school at the latter age would, therefore, have a considerably improved chance of finding employment. Not only would they be better qualified in point of age than they were at 16, but two additional years of schooling would further improve their chances of finding work.

A Junior Employment Service Is Also Required. It Should Begin at the School

The second measure, provision of special assistance in job-finding, is at present being applied to a limited extent. The National Youth Administration operates junior placement offices in about 65 cities jointly with the public employment service. This type of approach to the problem of juvenile unemployment is wholly commendable in its recognition of the facts that young persons in search of jobs have special needs and that a separate organization to deal with them is justified; yet it may fairly be said to fall short of an ideal arrangement in that it lacks emphasis upon providing the essential service at the point in the youth's career where it is most urgently required—which is just when he leaves school. In common with the other public employment services, the agency is inoperative until approached by the youth; and by far the greater proportion of youth have no contact with it whatever.

An additional handicap is that the youth fresh from school has no employment record, and that the testing movement, in spite of advances in recent years, has not

yet reached a point where it can furnish reliable instruments for making an estimate of the probable employability of such a person. The best policy to be adopted with each youth must still be arrived at from personal knowledge of his character and abilities, and most of the knowledge which exists on these points, together with the records of such achievements as the youth has to his credit, is to be found in the school which he has just left.

The School Is Uniquely Qualified to Undertake the Vocational Adjustment of Youth

The school, then, is the logical place for the first move to be made in the long process of vocational adjustment which faces the youth leaving the academic world, and at this initial stage the school holds nearly all the trump cards. The one thing it lacks is comprehensive acquaintance with the employment field. This knowledge must be added to it or, alternatively, a close and workable form of coöperation must be achieved with the agencies at present possessing such knowledge. A beginning has been made in four cities—Providence, Detroit, Philadelphia, and Los Angeles—where junior placement services already functioning in the schools are being assisted by the National Youth Administration or the state employment service. If this type of arrangement works well, it should be extended. The need for some decisive move is clear. We invest large sums in fitting youth for life, and then when the process is judged to be tolerably complete, we release them to shift for themselves. Under present conditions, the result appears to be to render many of them shiftless. Whatever advantages by way of developing moral stamina may inhere in the

sink-or-swim method of inducting youth into employment, the social and economic wastage involved is totally inconsistent with the pains we have been at to set the stage.

The two measures suggested for effectively bridging the gap between school and employment involve substantial, though entirely warranted, expansions in the activities of the schools. If accepted, however, they must require a considerable period to bring about. A compromise measure, which would produce a marked improvement and could be put into effect with little delay, would be to provide that between the ages of 16 and 18 a youth might leave school only when he had secured employment. This would immediately put an end to the increase in the numbers of out-of-school youth who have never had work.

CHAPTER III

YOUTH AND THE SCHOOLS

NUMEROUS CHANGES IN AMERICAN LIFE, SOME OF which have taken place slowly over a long period, some of which have come with great rapidity in recent years, are to-day by their cumulative effect precipitating a crisis in our educational system.

Modern Trends Throw Increasing Responsibilities on the Schools

Within the past century the population of the United States has changed fundamentally in several respects. It has changed, for example, from a preponderantly rural population in 1840 to an urban population at the present time. Even as late as 1880, 71.4 per cent of the population was rural; only 28.6 per cent was urban. In 1930 the majority of the population—to be exact, 56.2 per cent—lived in cities. The implications of these figures are clear. The people of the United States are no longer engaged primarily in agricultural pursuits. The children of today, therefore, do not have opportunities of the kind that were common when families lived on farms.

In the second place, there has been a marked change in the ratio of adults over 20 years of age to youth under 16. In 1850, for every 1,000 youth under 16 years of age there were only 889 adults beyond 20 years of age, but at present there are approximately 2,100 adults

for every 1,000 youth. In other words, the ratio of employables to total population has greatly increased.

A third significant change in our population has resulted from the restriction of immigration inaugurated in the early nineteen-twenties. On this point, Miss Dorothy Thompson makes a pertinent comment. She says:¹

The dirty work in this country, the unskilled and relatively badly paid work, was done for generations by European immigrants, who were camped as an alien body in the midst of our society. The native-born American had other ambitions than to be a day laborer, and if he worked with his hands he headed for the labor aristocracy and got into one of the powerful craft unions of the American Federation of Labor. His unions were not particularly interested in the unskilled workers, and they were difficult to organize because they spoke a dozen different tongues. They were bohunks, russkis, and wops. They came here from conditions so bad that they were willing to accept what were, compared with previous standards, high wages. But they aren't coming any more, and their sons are not bohunks or wops. Their sons are Americans, educated in American schools, and not prepared to join the encampments of their fathers.

There are some very significant implications for secondary education in this situation. In the past secondary education led mainly to the professions and the white collar jobs. To-day it is not possible for all high school graduates to find vocational opportunities in these preferred groups. It is essential to recognize functions for secondary education other than the prep-

¹ Dorothy Thompson, in syndicated newspaper column, March 29, 1937. Copyright, 1937, New York Tribune, Inc.

aration for college and the professions, and to prepare curricula for these other functions. The offering of these new curricula will have a tendency to attract and draw students from the academic course and thus relieve the problem of overcrowding in the professions.

The American Secondary School Is Not for a Selected Few; It Receives the Children of the People

Our democratic philosophy of education has committed us to the principle of providing an education at public expense to each American youth. It is true that this commitment has not been completely fulfilled. Yet at the present time, for the country as a whole, there are approximately 65 per cent of the high school population 14-18 years of age enrolled in school. Conversely this means that 35 per cent of the high school population are not enrolled in high school. It is also significant that there is wide variation among the states with respect to this percentage of pupils of high school age enrolled in school. These facts for a number of the states are worth noting. In Alabama the percentage is approximately 28; Arkansas, 33.5; Mississippi, 35.7; South Carolina, 35.8; Illinois, 62.7; Ohio, 68.7; New York, 72.9; Massachusetts, 74.1; California, 85.8; Nevada, 86.3; Wyoming, 86.6; Washington, 90.8; and Utah, 95.6.

The increase in pupil population of the secondary schools and colleges of this country is without parallel in the history of the world. In 1900 there were in our secondary schools about 700,000 pupils. There are now more than six million. In 1900 there were 237,592 students in institutions of higher education. The United

States Office of Education reports a total of 1,055,360 resident students of above secondary grade during the regular session from September, 1933, to June, 1934, and 303,754 for the summer session of 1933.²

It is quite impossible to meet the needs of this large body of young people registered in schools above the elementary level with offerings of the limited scope of the curricula acceptable to the selected body of pupils and students enrolled in secondary schools and institutions of higher education in 1900. Professor Lewis Madison Terman of Stanford University, for example, estimates that an intelligence quotient of 110 is required for success in doing the traditional classical high school curriculum, and that 60 per cent of all American youth rank below that score. As a result, the traditional curriculum is probably ill-suited to half or more of those attending school.

This situation has resulted in a number of evils in the present system. The first is excessive failure and dropping out of school because of inability to meet school standards and dissatisfaction with the program offered. From a careful sampling of 30,000 youth in the state of Pennsylvania, it is found that 28 per cent of pupils continued no further than the eighth grade; 23 per cent dropped out before graduation from high school; while only 42 per cent actually finished high school. In the Maryland Survey by the American Youth Commission, in which 13,538 youth were studied, the data relative to the percentage of youth who went beyond a given grade or level are exhibited in Table IV.

² *Statistics of Higher Education, 1933-34*, p. 15. (Ch. IV of the *Biennial Survey of Education in the United States: 1932-34*. U. S. Office of Education Bulletin, 1935, No. 2. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1937. 492 pp. 35¢.

TABLE IV.

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF 13,538 YOUTH AGED 16-24
IN THE STATE OF MARYLAND

<i>School Grade</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
5th Grade	94.4
6th Grade	88.7
7th Grade	77.1
8th Grade	67.0
9th Grade	57.2
10th or 11th Grades (Not Graduate).....	37.4
11th Grade (Graduate).....	29.2
12th Grade (Graduate).....	13.4
1 Year Beyond High School.....	9.1
2 or 3 Years Beyond High School.....	3.4

There is a definite positive correlation between the social-economic background and the grade completed of youth who drop out of school. In Pennsylvania the facts relative to this point are shown in Table V.

TABLE V.

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC BACKGROUNDS OF YOUTH
IN THE PENNSYLVANIA INVENTORY OF ONCOMING YOUTH

<i>Grade Completed</i> <i>Regular Course</i>	<i>Median Score</i> <i>On the Chapman-Sims</i> <i>Socio-Economic Scale</i>
6th Grade	1.9
7th Grade	2.3
8th Grade	2.8
9th Grade	2.9
10th Grade	3.8
11th Grade	4.9
12th Grade	5.0
13th Grade (Freshman)	7.5
14th Grade (Sophomore)	7.2

There Is a Sound American Tradition of a Free Common School for All

Throughout the history of education in the United States there has run the conscious effort to evolve a com-

mon school system—unified from the lower through the higher schools. We ought not have a dual system of education. By this is meant that we should not have separate vocational schools apart from those for general education, or separate schools for different ability groups or for those of different economic status.

It is perfectly clear that the old secondary education which stressed the selective and college preparatory functions is no longer suited to modern conditions. Secondary education is not now to be regarded as a privilege for a selected minority. It is rather to be thought of as a common experience for practically all youth between 14 and 18 years of age. In the past we have referred to the elementary grades as the "common school." This concept must now be revised to include the entire field of secondary education, which embraces the junior and senior high school and the junior college. The primary function of secondary education for the period ahead is to provide a common education for all at these higher levels. This is a new concept of secondary education. Never before in the history of the world has any society attempted to provide a common education at the secondary level for all of its population. The American high school is a unique institution. More pupils are to-day enrolled in American secondary schools than are enrolled in similar schools in all other nations combined. This is a new objective in secondary education and if it is to become the commonly accepted purpose for all the schools in the country, an entirely new orientation is required. Schoolmen and laymen alike must become aware of this new function and objective.

*The New Secondary School Must Offer Education for
the Common Life*

Never before has there been such a community of living as there is to-day. By the development of means of travel and communication, all people have been drawn close together, and facilities for the dissemination of knowledge and information are making it possible for all people to hear and to know the same things. Furthermore, there is a leveling of life in the economic and political areas. Mass production of cheap goods coupled with high wage scales is tending toward an economic democratization of life, and the development of political liberalism is bringing the "mass man" into political control. Thus walls that have hitherto divided our population into groups and classes are now being broken down. The masses of men are achieving in increasing measure social, political, and economic equality. Thus a basis of a broad and living common culture is emerging. Habits, customs, manners, and ways of thinking are fast becoming common to all groups and sections of our country. People in all classes in all sections of the country hear the same radio programs, read the same books, see and ride in the same kinds of automobiles, see the same moving pictures, play the same sports, and share hundreds of other things alike. They attend the same kind of schools, colleges, and universities, take similar courses, study the same textbooks, and collect the same kind of an education measured in semester units. The common life comes whether or not we will it. The prime function, therefore, of universal secondary education is to provide a liberal education for the common life of the whole population.

The major problem, therefore, is to determine what the nature of this education for practically the entire secondary school population should be. A number of suggestions may be made. It should, for example, introduce youth to the cultural heritage common to all peoples. There has been for centuries a stream of culture which has in every age been the basis of whatever civilization existed. This constantly growing cultural heritage has been preserved and exists in many forms—in language and literature; in sculpture, painting, music, and architecture; in religion, in folk ways, and in philosophy and science. The functions of secondary education should be primarily concerned with the processes of this cultural transmission and growth.

*The School Can Be a Seed-Bed of Individual Integrity
and Social Intelligence, and of General Spiritual
Values*

Secondary education must also concern itself with the large problem of the training of good and intelligent citizens. It has been emphasized from the beginning of American democracy that a democratic form of government must be built upon a system of universal education—an education which would enable the masses to be intelligent about all the problems involved in a democratic society.

✕ Education for the common life must also give consideration to the search for ultimate or spiritual values. To some this is the field of religion, and one of the strongest currents in American public education has been, and is, secularism. The American public school is secular. It is well that it is so. Nothing should be

done that would in any way make our public schools subject to the controversies which accompany sectarianism. But it would seem to be possible to keep the schools secular and at the same time introduce into them a type of instruction which would result in a growing appreciation on the part of youth for spiritual values. By means of wisely selected lessons in the life and teachings of the great leaders of human thought, including those not only from the Bible records, but also from other religious cultures, as well as from the fields of natural science, discovery, invention, the medical arts, statesmanship, and social reform, a body of instruction could be developed which would not only illuminate the facts of human history, but would inspire to achievement of the good life.

All that has been said is included in a concept of a liberal education in a democracy. This common education which all citizens in a democracy are to receive ought to develop within each the ability to create standards of conduct which control their behavior and functioning as citizens. It should, furthermore, develop within each individual the ability to deal masterfully with the factors of contemporary life. In thinking on this matter we go back to the situation in ancient Greece. The term, "liberal education," came from that ancient Greek setting. It was the type of education given to the *liberalis*, or freeman, in Greek society as contrasted with the type of education given to the serfs, or slaves. These freemen were the rulers and leaders of that society and were charged with the responsibilities of its organization, control, and direction. The education they received, therefore, was designed to equip

them for these responsibilities. Necessarily it had to deal with current problems. Consequently their education was realistic, vigorous, and dynamic.

*The Homely Concept of the Greatest Good for the
Greatest Number Remains Forever Luminous*

In a democracy such as ours we have decided that there are to be no slaves and that every man is a free-man in the sense that he stands upon an equal political plane with every other citizen and is called upon periodically to cast his vote for the organization, control, and direction of our society. If every citizen is to be able to discharge this high responsibility, there is a moral obligation upon him to be intelligent about all the issues and problems with which he is called upon to deal and upon which he passes judgment. No interest of contemporary life, therefore, should be absent from the training of citizens in a democracy. Every citizen should have the fullest possible opportunity to study and to discuss and evaluate every phase of contemporary life. This common program of secondary education, therefore, should be as broad as life itself in a modern society. It should cover every problem that individuals face, including those of an intimate personal character as well as those that relate to the highest ends and purposes of the total society.

The central problem of curriculum building for secondary education is to identify these common elements in the experiences of all, and to prepare materials and procedures which will insure that all youth have an opportunity to share in these experiences. These elements of our common life, therefore, ought to become the "core" curricula for all youth in the secondary

schools. The building of such curricula will require a thorough and continuous reorganization of the entire program of studies. These new materials should be developed and carefully graded for every level of secondary education from the first year of the junior high school through the junior college, and they should also be graded for different ability groups.

The Junior College Is a Secondary School, and the Expanding Frontiers of Adult Education Merge into the Secondary Field

The period of secondary education overlaps the break between high school and college, and recognition of this fact is evidenced by the presence of over 500 public and private junior colleges in the United States.

What is now thought of as the field of adult education offers some fine opportunities for the development of junior college education. This latest movement in American education is growing by leaps and bounds. The established colleges and universities, both public and private, either cannot or will not meet the needs for general adult non-professional education. The work of the federal relief agencies in this field during the depression is indicative of the magnitude of the problem. It is estimated by Mr. Harry Hopkins that at the close of 1936 more than 1,300,000 people were attending W.P.A. classes throughout the country. Nearly two million were taking correspondence courses from proprietary correspondence schools, and several hundred thousand were taking extension work from universities. Mr. Morse A. Cartwright of the American Association for Adult Education estimated in 1935 that adult education in the United States involves 20 million persons

—one-sixth of the total population.³ He found also that the demand is steadily increasing. These people are taking courses in every conceivable subject, but it is essentially non-professional. It is semi-professional and general adult education.

The popular response received by the forums developed by John W. Studebaker, United States Commissioner of Education, is another indication of the need for a wide distribution of general education at the adult level. This entire field offers a fruitful one for exploration and development by the junior college.

General and Vocational Education Need Not Be Separated; They Can Be Enmeshed as a Seamless Web

It is to be assumed that rudimentary education, commonly called "elementary education," can be completed in six school years. In other words, secondary education when properly conceived should begin with the seventh school year instead of the ninth school year, as is the traditional practice in the United States.

The first year of secondary education should begin with certain new materials of instruction in three fields; namely, the social sciences, the natural sciences, and the arts. Three major courses in these fields, supplied with abundant reading materials, should be made the core of the instructional program. The new materials must be concrete and of a type which is intelligible to pupils coming from the elementary school, where they have had only limited experience in independent study but have acquired a fair ability to read, write, and use numbers. The new materials should be organized in such a

³ Morse A. Cartwright, *Ten Years of Adult Education*, p. 60. New York: Macmillan, 1935, 220 pp.

way as to give information and at the same time stimulate pupils to interpret the world of modern times.

The materials introduced at this level of secondary education should also serve as means of discovering how far the preparation given in the elementary school has made the pupils proficient in the art of study. If necessary, remedial education should be provided. Experience indicates that many pupils require further training in mastery of the tool subjects, such as the study of language, the use of words, widening of the vocabulary, emphasis on spelling and on arithmetic, that are closely related to modern life. It should consist, however, not in repetitions of the elementary-school work but in stimulating contacts with new materials.

X Differentiation should be on the basis of intellectual and of non-intellectual interests and capacities, on the basis of probable length of stay of pupils in the schools, and on the basis of probable levels or types of occupations in which pupils will engage. Within the same core of subjects there may well be one set of materials for the more intellectually minded pupils likely to remain in school longer and to enter professional or very high-grade business or public-service callings, and another for those less capable of dealing with abstractions, who will leave school at or soon after the age of 16 and enter the occupations of medium or lower economic status.

X One would require and give exercise to the qualities of the superior minds and the other would be sufficiently concrete and applied to be meaningful and susceptible of being understood by those less capable and less interested in intellectual approaches. In addition, of course, in all but the smaller schools provision for

elective subjects should be made from the eighth grade on.

The program outlined for the seventh school year should be extended with carefully graded, non-duplicating materials through the following two or three years; that is, through the eighth and ninth years and, for some pupils, the tenth year. The part of secondary education here outlined is to be thought of as having for its chief purpose exploration by the pupils of a wide range of interests. The curriculum administered during these years should provide opportunity to study individual differences and to do whatever seems feasible in order to lead pupils to select, as they advance into the work of subsequent years, the types of elective study for which their abilities seem best suited.

General Education Should Be Dominant in the Earlier Years of the Secondary Period

Experience has shown that individual diagnoses of youth are not practical nor very reliable until youth are well along in their adolescence, preferably 14 to 18 years of age. This means that differentiation of youth prior to the beginning of the senior high-school period is not advisable, and that prior to that time the program of education should be fairly general and uniform for all, and that emphasis should be placed almost entirely upon a general or liberal education. There will be, of course, individual exceptions to these generalizations and the schools should be prepared to take these exceptions into account.

The curriculum should not be thought of as designed to give specific training for vocations. Its primary purpose should be to give preparation for intelligent par-

ticipation in the experiences of life which are shared in by all people—for general living in a modern community. If properly organized with suitable electives, it will also supply a basis for the first level of specialization, which will be entered upon in the tenth or eleventh school year.

What is here called the “first level of specialization” is not the same as the specialization provided in technical and professional schools. The first level of specialization is one on which the pupil population will divide, not merely as a result of the acceptance of the few elective opportunities offered in connection with the core curriculum, but as a result of the deliberate selection of certain groups of courses that involve more direct preparation for groups of pursuits.

In this connection it is important to recall that the traditional linguistic-mathematical curriculum of the classical secondary school was in its origin and for a long period in its actual administration a vocational curriculum. The traditional secondary-school curriculum was at first a pre-professional curriculum preparing a small group of selected students for further study which was to lead ultimately into the ministry or into the legal or medical profession. The classical curriculum, because of its prestige, has long held a preferred place in the educational system. It has in recent times been lauded by some people as a liberal, or general, curriculum when, in reality, it is still appropriate in many of its elements only for pupils intending to enter the learned professions.

Modern conditions have brought into positions of importance parallel with those of the time-honored learned professions other callings, notable among which

are engineering, business management, professional agriculture, and governmental service. For the new professions courses of study are needed which are not included in the traditional pre-professional, classical curriculum. With diminishing emphasis on the classical subjects and increasing demands for new courses, confusion has arisen with respect to the terms, "liberal" and "vocational." The fact is that the only truly liberal education is that which furnishes the common background for cultured life. Liberal education is the education which prepares for intelligent citizenship. It is the education which insures that individuals have a general understanding of their intellectual heritage.

*Vocational Education, If Not Too Narrowly Specific,
Articulates Smoothly with Liberal Instruction,
and Is Mutually Complementary with It*

In contrast with liberal education, vocational education aims at the cultivation of particular abilities. Even here, however, there are certain introductory forms of education which are comparatively broad in scope. When the vocational outlooks open to young people are analyzed, it becomes evident that groups of courses can be arranged, each group having certain common elements. For example, all the vocations which deal with machinery have a common background in physical science. All the vocations which are of the type commonly classified as commercial have a background in economics. The learned professions have a background in history and literature.

The relation between the liberal and the vocational parts of the secondary-school curriculum has been a subject of violent controversy in recent years. The time

has come when this controversy must end if young people are to have proper preparation for life. A plan of instruction must be adopted which will include for all pupils both vocational education and general, or liberal, education in the true sense of the word. The two kinds of education are not antithetical but supplementary. The really liberal curriculum, as has been pointed out, is that which prepares for the common activities of all citizens. The vocational curriculum is that which trains pupils to follow the lines dictated by their individual differences. How long the vocational curriculum is to keep any given pupil in school will be determined largely by the exactions of the vocation chosen. Whatever the period of schooling, the school should at all times aim to cultivate two types of intellectual maturity, two types of information, and two types of interpretation of the facts known to modern science and letters—one vocational in its interests and applications; one general, directly related to the common social life of humanity. At the beginning of secondary education general education should be stressed. During the later years vocational education should come into prominence.

The plan here advocated makes it possible to take advantage of the social inventions which in recent years have proved successful in providing new kinds of education. Reference is here made to the Civilian Conservation Corps camps and the work projects of the National Youth Administration. The plan also makes possible the utilization of apprenticeship opportunities in industry. It will, when fully understood, reconcile at one stroke all the parties to the controversy about the articulation of vocational training and ordinary school

work. What is needed is a salvaging, through appropriate organization, of all that is good in vocational education and a formulation of curricula for the tenth, eleventh, and subsequent years of education that are not dominated by subjects which are retained because of their traditional prestige.

The Core Curriculum of Education for the Common Life Must Be the Essence of the American Secondary School

The recommendation has frequently been made in this country that the schools which prepare young people for vocations be organized and conducted quite apart from the schools which administer the traditional curriculum. The discussions in earlier paragraphs of this chapter are intended to make clear the reasons why vocational education and general education must be combined rather than separated. Where a school system is small, the range of electives must of necessity be limited. General education is so much more important than any of the electives or later vocational courses that no school should omit the core curriculum. The courses which aim to give vocational preparation can be offered in wide variety in a large urban school system. In less populous areas there should be concentration on a single line of vocational courses in each small secondary school. It should be made possible, through transportation of pupils, for any individual pupil to take advantage in neighboring schools of opportunities other than those provided by the school nearest his home.

The time to be devoted to the program of specialization at the first level will, as pointed out earlier, differ

according to the types of vocational careers for which pupils are preparing. In general, pupils who are going to enter on specialization of a higher level will pursue their studies in secondary schools until they are 19 or 20 years of age and will then pass into the universities or the professional schools. Secondary schools, as the term is here used, include junior colleges. Those who are preparing for callings that demand less educational preparation may attend school in some cases for as short a period as two years. If education for vocations takes the form of apprenticeship or residence in work camps, the conventional methods of administering education will have to be radically revised. Relations with industrial or commercial concerns will be essential, but young people will have to be protected from exploitation by employers. The necessity of protecting young people dictates participation by educational authorities in the arrangement of each apprenticeship or work program.

Once in the history of American education a sweeping reform was made in secondary education. The report of the Committee of Ten presented in 1893 to the National Education Association resulted in the transformation of secondary schools from unstandardized, often badly organized, institutions into schools of a single dominant pattern. It has been the hope of some persons who have observed the chaotic condition of secondary education in this day that another authoritative pronouncement issued by an influential body, such as that committee, will once more compose all differences of opinion and bring all secondary schools into line with an accepted new pattern of instruction and organization. The reason why this hope of reconstruc-

tion of the educational system through pronouncement is a vain hope can be stated very briefly. The Committee of Ten merely rearranged existing materials of instruction. To-day invention of much new instructional material is necessary if either general education of the modern type or vocational training suited to the needs of individual pupils is to be provided. Furthermore, the administration of such materials as are here described as essential will necessitate the adoption of methods of teaching and forms of organization which must also be invented and must be refined through experimentation. The task of inventing and making effective a new system of education is different from the task of merely rearranging and standardizing known courses of instruction.

CHAPTER IV

YOUTH AND HEALTH

LONGEVITY AND THE AVOIDANCE OF CERTAIN DISEASES and conditions occurring in the older age groups are largely dependent upon reasonable precautions taken during younger years. Thus there is ample incentive for attention to health by youthful citizens." These words of Dr. Thomas S. Parran, Jr., Surgeon-General, United States Public Health Service, epitomize the significance of health in youthful years. The natural vigor and exuberance of youth often blind the young to any need for health education or wholesome practices. Yet the ills of age are closely connected with the acts of youth, and a wide-awake interest in health-producing habits and disease preventives should be a part of every young person's equipment.

Physical Defects and Disabilities, Surprisingly Prevalent Among Youth, Must Receive Attention

In a country where three-quarters of the school children examined have physical defects of one kind or another, where seven-tenths of the industrial workers under inspection suffer from physical ailments, and where in one year one-fifth of the young men applying for Army and Navy service were rejected because of physical weaknesses, the health of youth is apparently an item of no mean significance. If such conditions obtain among the young, when vitality is at its height,

the health picture of the whole population is one which cannot be too carefully scrutinized.

Despite the advances of American medicine in recent years, the problem of wide-spread ill-health remains a serious one. The baffling paradox of poverty amidst plenty, of want amidst abundance prevails in the field of health as it does in the economic sphere. Though the United States has the highest proportion of doctors of any country in the world, approximately one to every 865 people, millions of families never have the services of a physician. Despite extensive developments in dentistry, no more than one-fourth of our people make satisfactory use of dentists. The country is fairly well fortified with hospitals, but only about one person in 15 uses their facilities. Modern medicine and science know the answers to most of our ills, but literally millions of our people fail to avail themselves of these aids because of lack of funds, lack of knowledge, a dependence upon quackery, or the "unavailability" of the services.

Many ills can be prevented, but prevention is a doctrine not yet accepted by the great American public. Only 7 per cent of Americans are regularly examined for health, and only 5 per cent are immunized against disease. Not more than one dollar is used for prevention to every 30 spent in cures or medicines. The average busy American more readily spends a few dollars—and perhaps loses a few days from work—to cure a cold than a few minutes in a daily brisk walk to prevent one.

Health conditions will improve in the future and make the problems less serious if we (1) preach prevention and give out information that will enable people

to practise it, especially while they are young; (2) bring medical services within the financial and geographical reach of all; and (3) continue the scientific battle against disease.

The Public Needs to Be Informed, and Persuaded to Use the Results of Scientific Medicine

In order to waken the public to the need for protection against preventable disease and disability, it is necessary that they be informed about conditions. Few persons realize to what extent ill health is prevalent in this country. For years we believed we were a favored race in a pioneer land. But during the World War we learned that even among the "flower of our youth" an alarmingly high proportion were physically and mentally handicapped. Conditions have improved too little since that time. Preventable illnesses and fatalities are still needlessly high. Unnecessary sickness, untimely deaths, accidents, communicable diseases and innumerable minor ailments weaken the national stamina, yet conditions could be vastly improved if the public knew the facts and could be persuaded to utilize the results of scientific research. Ignorance, superstitions, and misconceptions with their accompanying quackery or lack of treatment can be rooted out in a continuous campaign of education. Many adults are beyond preventives and some out of the reach of cures, but there is yet time to give youth the aid necessary.

A campaign of public-health information has been carried on for many years, and with excellent results in some fields; in others, however, advance is slow because many subjects are tabooed. Only recently, for example, have the newspapers been willing to mention

the word syphilis, yet some reports indicate that approximately 10 per cent of our people are affected by it. Gonorrhea, another taboo, is much more common. Though syphilis strikes particularly at the young, there are comparatively few of them who know much about the scourge because little public information has been disseminated. The radio even now frowns upon the word, and there is an average of no more than a magazine article a month printed on the subject. The "hush-hush" attitude about this communicable disease is little short of stupid, since American medicine knows the cure and can prevent its spread through education and treatment, as Scandinavian countries have done recently. The United States Public Health Service is leading society's battle to bring the venereal disease fight into the open, and present indications are that public concern over this menace will hasten its control.

Tuberculosis Among Youth Has Not Yet Been Eradicated

Tuberculosis is another dread disease against which continuous propaganda should be carried on. Remarkable headway has been made in the control of tuberculosis since the public has been informed about its nature, but it is still rampant, causing 88,000 deaths in one year recently. It outranks all other diseases as a cause of death in the age-group 15 to 25 years, a group where the control so far is less effective than with others. In the United States alone in 1935, there were 4,045 deaths from tuberculosis among youth 15 to 19 years of age. The simple, harmless, and inexpensive tuberculin test is being given to more and more young people every year. When germs are found the X-ray locates

the infected area. It is not too much to hope that all youth in school and out will have eventually an opportunity to take the tuberculin test and, if infected, to receive immediate remedial treatment, thus protecting society as well as themselves against subsequent illness and a heavy financial burden.

Diabetes, cancer, and heart diseases, which are on the increase, can be prevented, alleviated, or at times cured if modern methods of case finding are used and early treatment started. We have the knowledge, techniques, equipment, and personnel with which to combat these ills, but the people as a whole are ignorant of the need for aid until it is too late, or are unable to secure it.

Regular examinations by doctors and dentists, with resultant action by patients, it is estimated, would reduce American health disasters by 75 per cent. Examinations, however, must be thorough, not perfunctory, and should be followed by remedial measures. While many schools and colleges now give physical examinations, the majority of youth do not yet receive any thorough inspection. Even those who do frequently fail to receive the medical attention which might remedy the discovered defects.

Minor Ailments Limit Vocational and Educational Opportunities

It is not only against the major diseases that the fight must be carried on, but also against the minor ailments that flesh is heir to. These handicaps undermine health eventually and seriously limit educational and vocational opportunities. Young and old are retarded by minor troubles. Of the school children examined in

six cities not long ago, 33 per cent had diseased tonsils, 34 per cent defective vision, and over 50 per cent decayed teeth.¹ Of industrial workers, another study showed over 70 per cent had nose or throat troubles, 40 per cent defective sight or hearing, and 60 per cent dental caries. Of 100,000 young men examined by the Life Extension Institute, more than 75 per cent had some specific defect. For the thousands suffering from these ailments, many more thousands are affected daily by common colds, headaches, rheumatism, and other ills, many of which can be traced to the so-called minor defects.

While there can be honest differences of opinion over the validity of these statistics, and the variables affecting examinations and subsequent interpretation, all will agree that there is an appalling loss of efficiency and tremendous cost financially because the public is not properly informed about minor ills and persuaded to do more to escape them. Some of these physical handicaps can be prevented by the application of information now available; others can be cured or reduced by short periods of treatment or simple operations. But people continue to suffer needlessly because of indifference or ignorance, and many live just below par because of lack of exercise, insufficient nourishment, and the disregard of the common laws of health.

In our present state of scientific development our young people should be able to control their health to a large extent. Sound information can replace ignorance and superstition, caution can replace carelessness, and

¹ Alden B. Mills, *The Extent of Illness and of Physical and Mental Defects Prevailing in the United States*, p. 14. Abstract of Publication No. 2, Committee on the Costs of Medical Care. Washington: The Committee, 1929. 19 pp.

health habits and practices can be developed. Schools, colleges, and other institutions could disseminate more health information continuously, thereby building up in the young the desire to be 100 per cent well and the determination to prevent ill health where possible.

Deaths and Injuries from Accidents Can Be Reduced by Safety Plans and Devices

The tempo of American life in the industrial age has placed accidents among the foremost causes of disability and death. Nearly 100,000 are killed by accidents each year, and approximately 8,000 of these are children between 5 and 15 years of age. Many more are seriously injured and crippled for life. Automobiles are now the gravest problem in accidental deaths to youth. Combined effort of the home, the school, and the community is necessary in a campaign where emphasis ought to be placed on preventive measures and more effective safety education.

The Economic Factor Is an Important One in the Health of the American People

Preventive methods are open to most people; curative ones are available only to the few. This is partly because of the almost prohibitive cost of medical care and partly because of the inequitable distribution throughout the country of medical facilities. To be sure, there are some people who have money for other things and none for medical care, but as a rule the thousands who do not buy services refrain because they cannot pay for them. The economic factor is still the important one for countless millions. Studies of the Brookings Institution disclose that even at a peak of prosperity (1929) most

of our families had incomes that did not permit the expenditure of much money for health purposes.²

Nearly six million families, or more than twenty-one per cent of the total, had incomes of less than \$1,000.

About twelve million families, or more than forty-two per cent, had incomes less than \$1,500.

Nearly twenty million families or seventy-one per cent, had incomes less than \$2,500.

Only a little over two million families, or eight per cent, had incomes in excess of \$5,000.

About 600,000 families, or 2.3 per cent, had incomes in excess of \$10,000.

The National Tuberculosis Association is one of the health agencies that have found a definite relationship between the income of the family and the death-rate. The Association's analysis of 1930 data, which implied the relationship between occupations and income, showed that among skilled workers there were 13 deaths per 1,000, whereas there were seven per 1,000 among the higher paid professional workers. The contrast held true among youth 15 to 24.

A Pittsburgh survey shows that families with annual incomes under \$150 per person had 40 per cent more illness than families which averaged \$420 or more per individual. The Society for Curriculum Study estimates that families with incomes under \$2,500 annually—nearly 70 per cent of the people—receive little more than half the medical, dental, and eye attention they need. Particularly disturbing is the situation in dentistry, where the attention is not much more than one-fourth the ideal.

² Maurice Leven, Harold G. Moulton, Clark Warburton, *America's Capacity to Consume*, p. 55. Washington: The Brookings Institution, 1935. 272 pp.

Medical service, under the present social system, is perforce costly. As a result the majority of the population, living as it does on low incomes, applies for it only in case of insistent need. Some method of payment should be devised which would bring medical aid within the buying power of the mass of people. Leaders in the medical profession, as well as social scientists, are studying this problem and attempting to improve the situation.

In addition to placing medical service within the financial range of all, including the middle classes, we need to place the facilities within their geographical reach. A radical readjustment is necessary in the present set-up. Far too many doctors are struggling on low incomes while would-be patients are suffering from lack of treatment. An officer of the American Medical Association estimates that we have 95 per cent of the necessary facilities and personnel (except in dentistry, where it may not be over 25 or 30 per cent), but use is not being made of them. Metropolitan centers have a surplus of practitioners, clinics, and equipment while sparsely settled areas are undersupplied. The problem of distribution is as acute as that of lowering the cost of care for those who cannot pay.

Medical Facilities Are Unevenly Distributed

While some states have approximately one physician for 600 persons, others have only one doctor for 1,300 persons. Mississippi, South Carolina, Alabama, and Arkansas are among the states whose people suffer from a lack of sufficient doctors, though the number is probably in proportion to the ability of the people to pay, since the annual income per person in these states is

approximately \$200. On the other hand, in New York, Illinois, California, and Connecticut, where the annual income per person is more than \$700, there is a physician for 500 or 600 persons.³ The tragedy of the situation in the states where there are comparatively few doctors is the physical suffering and possible preventable loss of life which result. In New Mexico a third of the fatally sick die unattended by a physician.

The lack of public-health service in some sections is forcibly demonstrated by the findings of a national survey of public-health nursing in 1930 which disclosed that more than half, or 1,618, of 3,072 counties in the United States had no public-nursing service whatever, and 375 additional counties had it in only a part of their areas. Approximately 7,000 hospitals have one million beds, yet nearly 30 per cent of these are empty while only 6 per cent of the people use them.⁴ Facilities and practitioners are distributed not according to needs but according to the ability of patients to pay.

It is obvious that if the people are to have the services needed, and the doctors who have time for additional patients are to be kept busy and have their incomes enhanced, purchasing power must be increased or some method of *distribution* of costs must be found, or *both*. Naïve, but true.

³ I. S. Falk, C. Rufus Rorem, Martha D. Ring, *The Costs of Medical Care*, p. 196. Publication of the Committee on the Costs of Medical Care, No. 27. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1933. 648 pp.

⁴ Adapted from Allon Peebles, *A Survey of Statistical Data on Medical Facilities in the United States*, p. 65. Washington: Committee on the Costs of Medical Care, 1929. 119 pp.

A Continuous Battle Is Being Waged Against Disease

One of the nation's most thrilling stories is the continuous battle waged by medical science against disease. On the whole it has been remarkably successful. Four hundred years ago in England leprosy was a disease that almost any one might get, yet now not many English or American people can even name a person who has it, and it is not uncommon to find a youth who never heard of the disease. Typhoid fever, smallpox, and other diseases have been brought under control, and many other serious diseases have been diminished. The Pasteurs of to-day are still at work.

Life has been extended and saved by the skill of modern surgery, and anesthetics have reduced the suffering of patients. The search for further preventives and cures goes on, but not as rapidly as it might if more funds were available for research. While some foundations devote large amounts annually to the research activities of groups and individuals, greater sums might be forthcoming if the public sensed the health problems, and if research were better organized and in some fields coördinated.

The decreased death-rate and the consequent increased span of life have made the diseases of age stand out. Scientific medicine can and will find the way to bring these diseases of age under control, but the answer probably will be by studying the ailments of youth, and helping young persons to build sounder and more disease-resisting bodies.

Mental Health Is Also a Problem of Young Persons

Any discussion of health that does not consider mental hygiene is inadequate. In 1935 there were 466,045 patients in public and private mental institutions in the United States,⁵ and probably millions of mentally ill persons received no professional care. First admissions to state hospitals alone in 1933 were 69,368 and of these 8,636, or one-eighth, were between the ages of 15 and 24. In the age group from 20 to 24, one person out of every 2,000 was admitted to a state mental hospital during the single year of 1933, and an unknown additional number of persons in this age-group were admitted to county, city, and private hospitals. Admissions to all mental hospitals have steadily increased in recent years.

Mental conditions relate often to physical ailments, but other factors frequently play a more important part. Health of mind is closely and directly related to the environment of the individual. Studies in crime and delinquency, for example, indicate the degrading influence of broken and divided homes, improper housing, and the lack of desirable associations. Conversely, it has been shown that much can be accomplished in restoring mental health by the proper conditioning of environment. "If we are not to be overwhelmed by our environment, we must bring about an inner world of harmony. Life is largely an organization of one's wishes and urges. The central drives of mastery, recognition, security, creative activity, adventure, and sex form the genetic-dynamic core of personality;

⁵ *Patients in Hospitals for Mental Disease*, 1935, p. 3. Washington: Gov't Printing Office, 1937. 52 pp. 10¢.

but these differentiate in many directions and seek expression in various ways. Normal development requires that their energies be directed into well-organized channels of thought, feeling, and action.”⁶

No permanent improvement in mental health conditions can be brought about without first removing the causes, or making the causes seem less significant to the individual. The following is a list of factors which are believed to be influential in producing maladjustments among young people:⁷

1. *Overstimulation*—A long school day followed by various club and sports activities, homework, the continuous radio, movies, fast driving, noise in cities, continuous proximity to other persons all active and stimulating—these things tax the energy resources and adjustive capacities of children of some temperaments.

2. *Economic insecurity*—Family worries over loss of income are readily communicated to impressionable children. Lack of pocket-money frustrates the highly stimulated desire to spend, causes difficulties in courtship, and delays marriage.

3. *Feeling of being personally uprooted*—City life is anonymous; family traditions are difficult to establish, broken homes common, moves to be near possible work a frequent necessity; passive mass recreation does not build up enduring friendships among the participants.

4. *Competition*—This is the rule of our society; but the majority are condemned in advance to repeated failure and the poorly equipped to situations of recognized inferiority.

⁶ Quoted by permission from Frank E. Howard and Frederick L. Patry, *Mental Health*, p. 105. New York: Harper and Bros., 1935, 551 pp.

⁷ Adapted by permission from Daniel A. Prescott, “Affective Factors in Education.” *Occupations*, Vol. 14, pp. 723-32, May, 1936.

5. *Belonging to a racial minority*—One out of every ten in the population is a Negro. Between white persons and persons of other races there is a genuine cleavage, which operates to the detriment of the non-whites. Differences almost equally important exist within the white race along cultural lines. The amount of personal frustration occasioned by these prejudices is tremendous.

It is apparent that some of these factors cannot readily be brought under control, but parents, teachers, social workers, and others are in a position to minimize the harm they do to youth. Guidance in this field will materially reduce the maladjustments to which so many young persons are subject.

Health Education Is Imperative; and Probably the Public School Will Expand Its Functions to Include Broader Health Services

The good health of youth is fundamental to a successful people. Since, in our democracy, the school is the one institution which touches practically all of our youth, the educational system should include significant health procedures. Education must help youth attain an attitude toward their bodies that will make them wish to keep themselves at their peak, must urge proper habits of living in the present for *present* experiences, since youth are not exceedingly interested in the future. Furthermore, many services not now generally available, such as thorough examinations, follow-up treatments, bed care, and some operations, will have to be provided gratis, perhaps in the schools if not elsewhere.

The accomplishments of medical science in the last 30 years give us great hope for the future. Educators and socio-economists are coöperating in working out

health programs. The building of healthier and happier lives is possible for many more of our people than it was in the past. Progress can be accelerated by active interest in spreading information on the prevention of illness and disability, by an extension of facilities and services, and by carrying on the scientific warfare against disease. To these add proper living in an ever-improving environment, and an attractive educational program in health habits for youth, especially children under 12, and a stronger and more vigorous, and eventually a more prosperous, people will inhabit the land.

CHAPTER V

RECREATION FOR YOUTH

NO TRESPASSING" SIGNS DOT THE LANDSCAPE, MAKING the "old swimmin' hole" and the baseball sandlot of father's day alike inaccessible to present-day youth. If a restrictive landlord has not made diving into a stream a legal risk, probably pollution from a near-by industry has made it a physical risk; if a barbed-wire or high board fence has not discouraged the young rookie from daily workouts, then parked automobiles or irrigation ditches have made chasing a fly ball in the outfield a precarious diversion. City streets, once the scenes of "Run, Sheep, Run" and "Prisoner's Base," are now the monopoly of passenger motors or trucks, and are death-threats to children. The simple outdoor pastimes of an earlier day are impossible in country, small community, and city.

At the same time home amusements are difficult to plan. The cramped quarters of expensive apartments as well as of tenements and the limited play-spaces of the typical house in city or town have made the home fun of former years hard to achieve.

The Significance of Leisure Increases with the Mechanization of Industry and the Reduction of the Hours of Labor

Concurrently, the lessening of job openings for youth, brought about by gradual social and technical

developments as well as by the depression, has presented older youth with unprecedented free time. The country is filled with young men and women out of school and out of work who have time on their hands and nothing to do. Even those who are employed have shorter work periods and longer spare hours than formerly, and are searching for inexpensive pursuits for their unoccupied time. Satisfying recreation, therefore, becomes a problem for young folk, and an item of consideration for the socially minded on a par with education, health and employment. For a few families it presents no difficulties. Money assures opportunities for healthful fun and diversion whenever these are desired. But to the ordinary American youth, the recreational outlook is limited because present facilities are either meager or expensive.

Recreation, rightly interpreted, is a *re-creating* of the vital energies of man, whether by physical exercise, creative activity, entertaining absorption, or mere relaxation. It is as essential to his well-being as food, sleep, and work. It is a pressing need in the present-day tempo of life and will be a future necessity for to-day's youth because of the routine, monotonous jobs in which most of them will engage.

Recreation Is a Preventive of Certain Social Ills, as Well as a Tonic for the Individual

Wholesome recreation is also a social desideratum. The accelerated speed of modern life, the congestion of population in large cities, the paucity of opportunities in rural areas, and the monotony of mechanized industry are forces that militate against tranquillity and contentment. In extreme cases they are injurious to

health unless offset by relaxation or release. As every one knows, much of the "crime" among juveniles occurs in congested districts where outlets for normal animal spirits are not provided. The establishment of clubs and supervised play programs has immediately reduced delinquency in such sections. Many of to-day's suicides are committed because people have not learned ways of forgetting their difficulties in absorbing activity or diverting entertainment. These maladjusted classes constitute only a small proportion of the population, but since their number is on the increase, especially in the younger brackets, any remedial measures are of social importance.

Moreover, for the normal, average individual, recreation has so much to do with character-building, physical health, mental stimulation, social hygiene, good citizenship, and community well-being that the question of how the people make use of their leisure hours is one of public concern.

Youth Are Conscious of the Lack of Recreational Facilities and Leadership

Young people are generally supposed to be competent in this regard, but careful observation will show that they are at as great a loss in the present complicated society as their elders. They have expressed themselves as sensitive to the situation. In practically all responses as to what youth need in the structure of living to-day they have placed increased opportunity for recreation next to the desire for remunerative work. In a Wisconsin rural community, the first desire expressed by youth was for more recreation, coming even before "more

work with pay.”¹ Over a fourth of the 16- to 24-year-olds surveyed in Detroit mentioned recreation as their most difficult problem.² In Maryland 69 per cent of the approximately 14,000 questioned stated that facilities for spare-time pursuits were inadequate.³

Ten surveys in various sections of the United States have elicited the fact that the recreational picture is the same everywhere, regardless of the type of environment; youth when out of the home must depend largely on the motion-pictures, automobiles, dance halls, pool-rooms, and less wholesome places for their amusement much of the time. The great body of young people engaged in their first jobs in cities far from home are particularly limited to this type of fun. One outspoken group “indicted” adults for the failure to prepare youth for leisure time, through lack of both facilities and training, and for failure to guard against the moral hazards which interfere with wholesome recreation. Specifically they accuse the adult population of “allowing the continued and flourishing existence of pitfalls for youth such as obscene literature, saloons, and gambling devices.”⁴ It was pointed out, for instance, that it is easier in a certain Eastern city’s suburbs to find a

¹ A. F. Wileden, *What Douglas County Young People Want and What They Are Doing About It*. Madison: University of Wisconsin, Extension Service of the College of Agriculture, Special Circular, January, 1936. 12 pp. mimeo.

² Rachel Stutsman, *What of Youth Today?* Detroit: Department of Curriculum and Research, City Public Schools, 1935. 232 pp. \$1.

³ Survey of Youth in Maryland, by the American Youth Commission of the American Council on Education, 744 Jackson Place, Washington, D. C. Report entitled *Youth Tell Their Story*, published 1938.

⁴ *Trial of Youth vs. Society*, Orange, N. J., April, 1935. Described in *Youth: How Communities Can Help*. U. S. Office of Education Bulletin, 1936, No. 18-I, pp. 19-21. Washington: Government Printing Office. 77 pp. 10¢.

place to drink in than a place to play games in, that there are twice as many public drinking centers as churches, four times as many as all other commercial amusement places, and eight times as many as playgrounds.

- X The provision of constructive types of entertainment is the best safeguard against unwholesome activities.
- Y What young people are asking for specifically are more playgrounds, community centers where supervised games, hobbies, forums, dramatics, and music can be indulged in, public swimming pools and organized sports. What they are engaging in largely are the passive pursuits of reading and radio-listening within the home, and attendance at movies and other commercialized entertainments without. Those in school give time to individual and team sports. One Eastern-state analysis records the *activities* as participated in by youth in the following order: individual sports, reading, team games, loafing, dancing and dating, movies, hobbies, radio, quiet games, and spectator sports. The same survey lists the following *desires* of youth according to their popularity: parks and playgrounds, community centers, swimming pools, dances, supervised activities, educational classes, clubs, and movies. The rural youth differed from the urban in placing movies, dances, and class groups in advance of some of the other pursuits.⁵

The Motion-Picture Is Properly a Medium of Art and Education, Not a Mere Habit-forming Stimulant

The attendance of young people at commercialized sports is negligible. Their preoccupation with the motion-pictures, however, calls for consideration. A recent

⁵ Survey of Youth in Maryland, *op. cit.*

press report, summarizing the results of an inquiry of the Children's Aid Society in New York City, said: "While 12 boys and girls are passing three hours a week in thrills and adventures at the motion-pictures, only one is at home getting the same thing from books. . . ." Forty-seven per cent of these 10- to 16-year olds attended the movies twice a week, 49 once a week. Two per cent went every day, and only 2 per cent went seldom.⁶ These figures refer to children in highly congested sections, but they represent in extreme form the interest which the pictures have for all city young people. Rural youth would no doubt be similarly interested if given the chance. They consider themselves unfortunate if the facilities for this type of entertainment are denied them.

It is generally agreed that in most respects talking pictures are an unsatisfactory form of recreation for the young. While they provide considerable entertainment and, in frequent instances, information of educational value, they are passive activities and at best provide only temporary entertainment and time-filling. Even on a basis of recreational hours delivered, they are expensive and they contribute in no way to physical well-being.

They exercise their hold on young people partly because they are readily available while other ways of spending spare time are not. Surveys prove that young persons whose home life is stimulating and whose recreational life is full and varied are infrequent visitors at movie houses. Figures, secured from questionnaires,

⁶ Quoted by Payson Smith and Frank W. Wright, in *The Educational Opportunities of Youth in Maryland*. Unpublished preliminary report to the American Youth Commission of the American Council on Education, 744 Jackson Place, Washington, D. C.

show that approximately one-third of the regular youthful attendants at movies go from a lack of anything else to do.⁷ This is a telling commentary on our failure to prepare youth for varied spare-time activities and to provide diversified facilities.

Reading Is a Growing Leisure Pursuit, and Public Library Service Must Be Greatly Extended and Improved

Reading, the most frequently recorded pastime, should be productive of present and enduring satisfactions. However, a perusal of the type of undirected reading being indulged in by the majority of young persons leaves one somewhat pessimistic. Consisting almost entirely of popular-fiction periodicals and inferior books, if any, it does not give promise of the future adult enrichment that it could be cultivating. An encouraging aspect, however, is that the reading habit, inculcated in school, carries over at all age-levels and continues in the years out of school. The percentage of those who read frequently is higher at 24 years of age than at 16. Provision for guided reading and study in community or school libraries would prove valuable in fostering this habit. Where libraries are to be found, they are used. But unfortunately such facilities are relatively limited. According to the American Library Association estimates, 47 million people in the United States are out of reach of libraries, and other statistics show that rural youth have much poorer provisions for reading than urban citizens enjoy. Traveling libraries and extension services are remedying this condition, the number of books made available through such methods

⁷ Survey of Youth in Maryland, *op. cit.*

having doubled in the last two years, according to one state survey.

Like attendance at moving pictures, reading is indulged in more than is wished. Much of it is done in lieu of something more preferred but not obtainable. Surveys show that while reading leads in pastimes for most young persons questioned, games and more active forms of recreation are the desired pursuits recorded. The fact that it is such a common type of recreation should suggest to the educator the opportunity that he faces if he really wishes to reach youth.

Overemphasis on Competitive Athletics Should Give Way to Recreational Interests Capable of Carrying Over into Maturity

Physical exercise bulks large in any youthful inventory of activities, actual or merely wished for. No school nowadays but must have its gymnasium and playground; and out-of-school youth clamor for ball fields, swimming pools, and tennis courts. Vigorous bodily exercise is beneficial to all growing individuals, and it is desirable that facilities for physical exertion should be available to all. Competitive sports, however, which are immensely popular, can be over-emphasized, for they frequently produce undesirable results. Such uncompetitive activities as hiking, camping, swimming, skating, and cycling should be encouraged.

Emphasis on vigorous bodily exercise, in whatever form, can attain only one of several useful ends of organized recreation. It has the further defect that as youth become older their taste for such pastimes lessens, and they are found to have very few other resources. The result is that in a short time they cease

altogether to participate in any except the passive varieties of recreation—which can hardly re-create at all. In examining the results of several studies, these two facts invariably emerge—that interest in strenuous sports quickly subsides as the youth reaches adulthood, and that a surprisingly small proportion of youth have any principal recreational interest other than physical games, dancing, and motion-pictures.

Creative Arts and Craftsmanship Offer a Priceless Basis for Enjoyment and Satisfaction

In the main, remarkably few young persons seem to have any idea of the joy to be found in cultivating interests which do not primarily involve either extreme exertion or passive looking or listening. Very few of those surveyed have any experience with hobbies, or personal creative activity. They have not learned either at home or elsewhere any recreational skills and are resourceless when deprived of the amusements they are accustomed to. Even those who are ingenious and inventive, or who have had the advantage of attending schools where individual interests have been encouraged, upon graduation from school too often enter a community life that is bereft of recreational opportunities. Though once active in art, crafts, drama, or music, they drop these activities because no local organizations exist in the adult community to foster them.

Yet youth like hobbies, if countless personal interviews may be taken as criteria. Invariably young people manifest eager interest when introduced to such diversions as stamp-collecting, ship-modeling, gathering transportation posters, or similar leisure pursuits. In some localities or strata of life, however, particularly

where parents are not resourceful or imaginative, children have no conception of the possibilities for fun and satisfaction in this realm of recreation. There exists a great opportunity for developing the curiosity, the spirit of adventure, and the desire to create that is innate in every individual, if leadership can be made available in this field. We are coming to accept the necessity of vocational and educational guidance, but we regard recreation as a thing any one can find for himself. Training for self-sufficiency and enjoyment of life, like training for citizenship and marriage, have been left for youth to pick up as best they may.

*The Public Recreation Movement, Long Under Way,
Is on the Threshold of Great Advances*

Young people desire and need physical exercise, social contacts, creative outlets, artistic experimentation, mental stimulation, spiritual enrichments. All these are a part of an adequate recreational program. While millions do not have the benefits of such programs, an increasing number each year do, for the public recreation movement has been under way since 1889 when the first public playgrounds were opened in Boston. Though recently curtailed because of the retrenchment of depression days, it is now returning to its normal rate of development. In fact, the movement has been accelerated by the public's recognition, during the days of widespread unemployment, of the remedial and compensating qualities of recreation. It has gradually gained momentum until to-day city recreation systems provide playgrounds, community centers, little theaters, camp and picnic sites, swimming pools, tennis-courts, golf courses, and athletic fields in many sections of the

United States. They also supply leadership and facilities for drama, music, nature study, arts and crafts, and other similar activities. They reach people of all ages and kinds. In 1935, according to the National Recreation Association, public recreation was reported in 4,190 communities, and 43,419 leaders were employed. The aggregate attendance in terms of individual visits at outdoor centers was 300 million and at indoor centers 75 million. These public programs are supported by taxes for the specific purpose, or by special relief funds.

In addition to publicly conducted programs, churches, the social agencies, lodges, and clubs have developed activities for various groups in their communities. Modern homes with their game rooms, and neighborhood play programs are reflecting the growing interest in the development, while prisons and reformatories have added recreation to their rehabilitation measures. Notwithstanding all this healthy advance, recreational facilities are still out of the reach of the great majority of people. Rural and small communities on the one hand and congested parts of large municipalities on the other lack opportunities, though the latter are more fortunate than the former.

Development of the Public School as a Community Center Is Significant

Both facilities and leadership are insufficient for the recreational needs of youth. By facilities is meant parks, playing fields, club centers, libraries, and equipment. Because of the high cost of all of these, communities where public funds have not been provided by wide-awake citizens or where private finance has not underwritten such programs are without them. The federal

and state governments have recently made wide provision for parks, picnic grounds, and reservations, but central locations within city and community limits are difficult to secure. It is estimated, for instance, that city-park acreage should be doubled to meet the demands of present urban dwellers. In many localities the churches, and social agencies such as the Christian Associations and like groups, provide equipment and personnel, but again such services are limited very largely to communities of considerable size. In smaller localities little provision is made. During the depression the federal government through the W.P.A. and the National Youth Administration has given valuable aid to recreational programs or has initiated new centers, but no measures have yet been taken for their permanent services.

The greatest hope for the country-wide establishment of recreation centers lies with the schools. School buildings exist in every community in the land. Many are equipped with gymnasiums, auditoriums, cooking laboratories, manual training divisions, and club rooms. Practically all have playgrounds. In the school properties the public has a big financial investment and carries a heavy annual expense. By increasing this slightly for equipment, upkeep, and janitorial service, an ideal center for late afternoon and evening recreation would be available to practically every locality. With the major expense of a center provided for by public support through taxes, the more modest cost of personnel could be furnished by most communities if the need for centralized recreational programs for adults as well as for younger citizens were recognized by the public.

Some cities now utilize their school plants to the

full. Every evening suitable parts of the buildings are ablaze with light from top to basement, while such diverse activities as folk, tap, and social dancing, hobby groups, study clubs, story telling, music, dramatics, and team games attract the families of the district nightly to these true community clubs. However, city schools in general are not used for recreation. The reluctance of many school-boards, mindful of increased expenditures and uncertain concerning the scope of their legal responsibility, has slowed up progress in this direction, but undoubtedly the use of the school community centers will become eventually a vital part of the urban recreation program. In the country the district school has long been the local community center—the scene of play during the day, and box suppers, “socials,” lectures and “exercises” during the evenings. In recent years the establishment of consolidated schools has brought problems of transportation, but has not lessened the continued interest in making the school a social center.

Other types of centers have been developing of late. Field houses in parks, church recreation centers, community houses built as memorials or erected by industries for their workers are examples of the improved provisions for the diversified use of unoccupied hours.

*Community Clubs for Boys and Girls Fail to Hold
Many Youth in the Late Teens and Early Twenties*

Organized clubs are a conspicuous part of adult recreation. The same is not true of youth. Whether this is due to lack of opportunity or to the absence of the “joiner’s” urge at that period of life is difficult to determine. After the junior high school it is the excep-

tion rather than the rule for a youth to join a club. The Maryland study, already mentioned, shows that 72 per cent of the white and 86 per cent of the Negro youth of the upper age brackets belong to no clubs. Figures obtainable from other sections disclose a dearth of clubs for people from 16 to 24 years of age, and only about one-third of the 7- to 12-year group belong to any organization. The largest percentage of these are boys. In a survey of over 8,000 young girls in California, only 15 per cent were found to be organized.⁸

The excellent club work of many of the so-called "character-building organizations" is well-known. Their contribution in this area could be greatly enhanced if a larger proportion of the youth were attracted to their programs. There is a noticeable gap in the club enrolments at the senior high-school level. An opportunity to make a valuable contribution to co-recreation activities awaits fulfilment here.

A noteworthy experiment in club life for younger boys and girls was recently inaugurated by the board of education in a congested section of New York City under the leadership of the W.P.A. technical directors. Clubs for children in 44 densely populated centers were formed. Recreation leaders visited the street corners where gangs were accustomed to congregate and invited the youngsters to form or join clubs. Rooms were made available through the schools, and lively programs of activity as well as club organization took children from the streets, cellar clubs, and dance halls. Neighborhood

⁸ Glen O. Grant, *Much Ado About Doing*. Unpublished 32-page typed report by the Supervisor of Community Recreation, Los Angeles Department of Playgrounds and Recreation, 1936. On file in the library of the National Recreation Association, 315 Fourth Avenue, New York City.

agencies and churches provided the names of youth and helped develop some of them into junior leaders. The beneficial results of this effort prove the social value of directed club life among the young in some localities, and suggest a further avenue of development in the recreational field.

The Training of Recreational Leaders Is a Vital Necessity

The experienced director is the heart of any successful community project. Frequently where facilities are well supplied, the program suffers from a lack of expert direction. But such direction is difficult to procure, for trained leaders in the recreational field are scarce. As a special profession it is comparatively new and has attracted a limited number of able men and women. Usually the supervision of recreation has fallen to physical education teachers or athletic coaches in the general belief that recreation consists largely of active exercise and games. The offering is much richer than that, and when one considers the qualifications necessary to success in such leadership it will be seen that the work is a high calling, requiring experience in group directing, ability to organize, initiative and ingenuity, buoyant personality, acquaintance with the whole field of crafts, the fine arts, games, sports, and entertainment features, and an educational background of sociology, pedagogy, government, biology, psychology, guidance, and physical education. Perfection cannot be expected, but the men and women required for recreational directorships must be able to manage a program unobtrusively yet certainly, must be attractive to young and old, must possess teaching ability and the capacity to respect all

types of personalities. Neither playgrounds nor indoor programs can operate safely and successfully without such leadership.

Recreation leaders are needed in such varied centers as camps, hospitals, city shelters for the homeless, orphanages, social agencies, prisons, reformatories, centers for the physically handicapped, pre-school nurseries, schools, and community centers. Indeed they now serve in all these institutional types, though on a limited scale. If recreation develops in the United States as it promises to do the profession should attract to itself many of the young college students who have found a challenge in sociological studies. As a profession which has not reached the saturation point, because it is undeveloped, it offers untold opportunities for future openings, and should be of interest to youth as a possible field for remunerative and satisfying employment. Likewise, volunteers, properly trained, can find recreation in this calling on a part-time basis.

The universities and teachers' colleges have too long delayed the inauguration of courses for the training of leaders in this new endeavor. Recently, however, a few have set up curricula which include the social sciences, speech, fine arts, industrial arts, education, and physical education. In addition to the studies designed for professional recreationists, shorter courses planned to prepare lay leaders for recreational activity are being offered. The National Recreation Association, which formerly conducted a "graduate school" but recently discontinued it, and the W.P.A. are conducting short-time training institutes in various sections of the nation, among both Negroes and whites, for adults already partially equipped for such service. In the cities recrea-

tional employees, teachers, church workers, and other social workers attend, while in rural sections Four-H leaders, Grange representatives, county farm agents, clergymen, teachers, and others avail themselves of these periods.

Coincident with the training of workers to enter the recreational field should be an arousing of public interest in the universal need for those spare-time activities that will be positive and socially healthy. Municipal provision for many of these opportunities should be supplied and school training in recreational skills among adolescents should keep pace with the opportunities for practice. Textbooks and curricula should include many projects of recreational content, and techniques for the use of leisure hours should be taught.

The Public Becomes Increasingly Aware of Its Responsibility for Recreation

It is clear that the federal, state, and local governments must everywhere augment the private recreational programs now in existence if the public as a whole is to enjoy the fruits of leisure. Public funds are now supporting much that is being done, and federal appropriations under the W.P.A. have rescued from extinction many of the programs which were crippled by the depression. Communities are increasingly aware of their privilege and responsibility. Expenditures for recreation were greater by several million last year than ever recorded before, and the number of outdoor and indoor centers has doubled in a short time.⁹ But much

⁹ Katherine Glover, *Youth: Leisure for Living*. U. S. Office of Education Bulletin, 1936, No. 18-II. Washington: Government Printing Office. 126 pp. 15¢.

more is needed. Recreation, which once was considered the luxury of the few, should be placed within the reach of the many. As a great deal of that which is desirable is costly and involves group action, municipal interest seems necessary for its development. Leadership and the initiation of projects may come from various sources but the primary responsibility, ideally, should rest with the local community.

Where recreation is municipally administered, three agencies are involved—the parks, the schools, and recreation commissions or boards. The National Recreation Association recommends the following requirements as minimum needs for a successful program under whatever auspices: a responsible lay board of control; a full-time trained executive; a definite budget; the availability for recreational purposes of all suitable city-owned property; and a varied and comprehensive program.¹⁰

Signs Point to the Realization on a Large Scale of Creative and Cultural Values in Leisure

An analysis of the recreation situation discloses several beneficial trends in this field which, if continued, promise enrichment for the youth of the country. Communities are awakening to the value and necessity of recreation and are organizing extensive programs which will promote activities for young and old. Where opportunity for self-expression is provided, there is a noticeable swing from the passive type of recreation to the active, especially among the young in whom both

¹⁰ Adapted from a memorandum to the author by Weaver W. Pangburn, of the staff of the National Recreation Association, 315 Fourth Avenue, New York City.

the vigorous and creative urges are strong. Commercialized amusements, though popular, are no longer the chief absorbers of unoccupied hours of youth in centers where other facilities are provided. Recreational provisions are spreading from the cities to the country, developing according to the particular needs of rural groups.

These are hopeful signs. All endeavors which tend to push to the fore leisure pursuits of a cultural and intellectual nature or those which will have a hold-over value for adult life should be encouraged and supported. Statesmanlike planning and the fostering of favorable public opinion are needed to insure that the further development of the recreation movement may be in the interest of the general welfare.

CHAPTER VI

THE PLIGHT OF RURAL YOUTH

AS THE NATION CAME SUDDENLY TO RECOGNIZE THAT conservation of its soil and other natural resources was essential to its future welfare, so must it also become aware of an even greater and more important obligation—conservation of its human resources. In rural areas very important elements of the human problem—low standards of living, inequality of educational opportunity, and the social correlates of farm tenancy—focus acutely in the youth segment of the population.

The mass character of the rural youth problem was catapulted into the arena of public consciousness by the depression, as was the realization of the existence of widespread areas of depleted soil. Agencies sprang into existence to meet the patent needs, and at the same time research programs were initiated to seek for causes and results, the matrix of which rests in long-time trends. But research on soils had been carried on for many years prior to 1929 so that when the crisis came and public action was secured to stop the destruction, measures on the basis of known facts could be instituted at once. But here the analogy stops, for research on the conditions of youth, especially rural youth, had been so scattered and fragmentary that when the country realized that the time for action had come, problems of youth had to be studied at the same time that emergency corrective measures were being applied.

For a full appreciation of the varied ramifications and implications of the problems of rural youth, two approaches are necessary: the individual and the national. From the standpoint of the individual, the problem is one of providing opportunities whereby each youth may develop to the full measure of his potentialities; from the standpoint of our national well-being, the problem is one of equipping youth to become participants in and conservators of our American democracy. That thinking leaders both within and without the Federal government have discerned the patent youth problems and are attacking them from these two fronts is evidenced by the establishment of the National Youth Administration and the C.C.C. within the government and the initiation of research programs by state and municipal welfare agencies and educational institutions in limited areas and by the American Youth Commission on a national scale outside of the federal government.

The Large Number of Rural Youth on Relief Is a Symptom of a Long-Time Debilitating Trend

The number of youth in rural families on relief in October, 1935, for the country as a whole was approximately 650,000 in the age-group 16 to 24 years inclusive. In the previous February the number on relief had been over a million. Predominant among the causes for the drop were: the improvement of agricultural conditions, the taking over of thousands of rural relief cases by the Resettlement Administration, the expansion of the work of the C.C.C., and the initiation of the works program of the W.P.A., whereby a

total of some 136,000 rural relief families, in which were many youth, had been given work instead of relief. Though the 650,000 represent only about 7 per cent of the total rural youth within this age-group, it is probable that if to these were added the youth in families being helped by the various agencies just mentioned but who were not members of so-called relief families at that date the total number being assisted directly or indirectly by some Federal agency would have reached close to 10 per cent of the total rural-youth population.

The rural population falls into two residential groups, rural-farm and rural-nonfarm. In states with a high percentage of rural-nonfarm population in relation to the farm population the rural relief problem seemed to be particularly grievous. In certain other states which are suffering from exhaustion of soil and which have large areas of submarginal land the farm youth especially were markedly dependent. The plight of the rural-nonfarm youth group was in many places more obvious than that of the farm group, because in villages, where the majority of the nonfarm population live, they would be seen sitting about idle.

Enforced Idleness Has Not Been Confined to the Destitute, But Has Been Common Among All Economic Classes

The problem of being wholesomely employed has not rested alone with those so poor that they or their families had to ask for relief. Thus it was that a director of extension in one of the leading agricultural colleges of the United States tellingly described the situa-

tion that existed in one of the best farming communities, comprised of a village of about 1,500 and a tributary farm population of about 4,000.

In this community

there is a group of approximately 500 young men in and tributary to this village who have very few constructive group activities. They congregate on the street corners, in the two pool halls, and occasionally at nearby commercial dance halls. The leaders of this community are quite concerned over the activities that are promoted in these commercial recreation places. The existing commercial programs are presented with so much appeal and drawing power that the positive programs in the community are at a decided disadvantage. The adult leaders and leaders among the young people are asking, "What can we do to improve the situation? Where can we get help?" The young folks and the adults who have money and desire a higher type of recreation go to the nearby city.

The necessity for relief and enforced idleness, prevalent among both rural-farm and rural-nonfarm youth, are the results of long-time trends as well as the cataclysmic action of the depression. The solution of the problem, therefore, rests upon a clear perception of what forces have been and still are acting to handicap rural youth in making their economic and social adjustments into adulthood. One of these handicaps is the lack of economic opportunity.

The Check of Youth's Cityward Migration by the Depression Has Caused the Accumulation of a "Youth Surplus" in Rural Territory

For decades prior to the depression there was a constant and heavy flow of the oncoming youth from the country to the cities; industrial expansion in the

cities incessantly called for young workers. For generations soils have been wasted, forests destroyed, and other natural resources dissipated in one way or another. With the coming of the depression and the slowing down of industrial activity, rural youth were no longer needed in the cities, and when they turned back to or were forced to remain in their home communities the virgin resources that had provided opportunities to previous generations had too often disappeared. On the one hand, prices for agricultural products afforded little help in their distress, and on the other hand production for consumption was greatly limited by exhausted soils. The interaction of this complex of factors created the youth problem faced by rural America to-day. The complexity demands analysis.

Migration from the country to the city during the three decades prior to 1930 had created serious rural problems, such as widespread disorganization of rural communities, and, in some areas, almost complete depopulation. Consequently, by 1930 the farm population of the country as a whole was nearly two million less than in 1910. Young people had been the chief migrants. During the years from 1920 to 1930 more than two million more young people left the farms than returned to them. Suddenly the trek stopped; the economic crash threw barriers in the form of unemployment in the paths to the cities, and at the same time sent many to the land as an open sesame for relief from urban distress. As a result, the net migration of youth from country to city during the five years from 1930 to 1935 probably did not exceed 200,000, leaving almost a million more on the farms than would have been there had the migration flow continued in these five years as during the

previous 10 years.¹ This estimate does not take into account the number belonging to the rural-nonfarm population who became stranded through the cessation of small industrial operations or because of the exhaustion of the natural resources upon which the family had been dependent. The excess of both the farm and rural-nonfarm youth turned to the soil. Those in good land areas too often found the good lands all occupied and at the same time there existed no need for their labor; those in poor land areas, whether they belonged to the farm or rural-nonfarm group, found land available, but unproductive, and working it offered only poverty.

*Mechanization and Commercialization of Agriculture
Are Increasingly Restricting Opportunities on
Good Land*

The future does not bid fair to enhance the opportunities of farm youth on good land. There can be too many persons on good land in relation to the possibilities and opportunities as well as in submarginal areas.

Youth in good land areas, in the corn and cotton belts especially, are facing two relentless forces—the mechanization and commercialization of agriculture. Productivity per agricultural worker rose from 100 in 1900 to 141 in 1930, probably due to the increasing dependence on machines.² Output per worker will

¹ Estimates made from "Farm Population Estimates, January 1, 1936," Bureau of Agricultural Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture release, Oct. 27, 1936.

² Mordecai Ezekiel, "Population and Unemployment." *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 188, pp. 230-242, Nov., 1936.

probably increase still more during the next 25 years.³ The mechanical cotton-picker, if it becomes practical, will revolutionize cotton raising. The electrification of the farm, a process now in operation, must inevitably accelerate the whole mechanization process.

A recent study of labor in the growing of wheat in Ford County, Kansas, shows that an acre of wheat can be grown now with about 25 per cent as much labor as in 1919. The combination harvester-thresher, the tractor, motor truck and the larger units of tillage equipment have effected this change.⁴

The introduction of machinery puts the farm on a commercial basis; the farm becomes essentially a food factory, an industrial plant instead of primarily a home. The profits are measured in dollars and cents and not in wholesome family life. Successful mechanized and commercialized farming inevitably drives out hand farming. It is on good land that machinery can be introduced; it is to good land that investments flow and in consequence tenancy increases, further barring the chances for the youth ultimately to become owners of family-sized farms.

Increasing Farm Tenancy Diminishes the Future Opportunity for Youth

The growing proportion of farm tenancy more and more restricts the chances of rural youth ultimately becoming farm owners—that is, of climbing up the agri-

³ Bushrod W. Allin, "The Chances in Agriculture," in Goodrich and others, *Migration and Economic Opportunity*, p. 399. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1936.

⁴ Martin R. Cooper, "Mechanization Reduces Labor in Growing Wheat," *The Agricultural Situation, April 1937*, Bureau of Agricultural Economics, United States Department of Agriculture.

cultural ladder from laborer to independent ownership. The per cent of farms operated by tenants rose from 26.0 in 1880 to 42.4 in 1930 but dropped to 42.1 in 1935. However, in leading agricultural states of the Middle West—Illinois, Iowa, Wisconsin, Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, Kansas, Nebraska, and Missouri—the proportion as well as the total number of farms operated by tenants increased between 1930 and 1935. In some of the good land areas of the South, though tenancy seems to have declined relatively during these years, it is one of the chief problems, and the human problems accompanying it have grown more intense.

Dr. T. J. Woofter, Jr., in speaking of the characteristics of the plantation areas, says, "The location of the areas of large-scale ownership and operation is determined by the adaptability of the land to large-scale production, chiefly of cotton. . . . These areas are characterized by a high percentage of tenants, a high degree of concentration of land ownership. . . ." ⁵ In these areas live thousands of youth in the homes of impoverished sharecroppers.

The Greatest Surplus of Youth Is on Poor Land

In so far as opportunities for youth on poor land are concerned, it makes little difference whether they are there through having recently turned to it as a means of support or whether they are there through long-time residence. The major regions where youth are handicapped by living on land unfit to produce a return sufficient for the maintenance of a decent standard

⁵ T. J. Woofter, Jr., *Landlord and Tenant on the Cotton Plantation*, p. 1. W.P.A. Research Monograph V, 1936.

of living are the Appalachian-Ozark Highlands, the drought areas, the cut-over lands of Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin, and the Southeast.

In the Southern Appalachian region, that highland area which stretches from the southern edge of Pennsylvania southwestward into Georgia, are thousands of youth dependent on poor land because the coal mines cannot absorb their labor, and good land is fully occupied. Thousands of youth will leave, or, no doubt, are leaving with the first glimmer of opportunity. They must migrate or subject themselves to lower and lower standards of living. The agriculture of the region is overcrowded, expansion of the mines is improbable, and few opportunities are available or likely to become available in small manufacturing plants, trade, and services. Only a possible increase of work in forestry offers a chance for an accretion of opportunities. Indeed, it has been estimated that at least 340,000 fewer people than now inhabit it should live in this region.⁶

Pressure of population on the land in the Great Plains is exceedingly heavy. Drought and wind erosion have struck the area; poverty is the result. Methods of farming that have brought destruction, if continued, can result only in further suffering.⁷ The plight of the youth of this region can be somewhat appreciated in terms of the estimated need for migration, if this is even approximately accurate. Assuming that land fit only for grazing could be restored to grass and the areas capable of being irrigated kept under intensive cultivation, it is believed by some that the Great Plains should have

⁶ Goodrich and others, *op. cit.*, p. 123.

⁷ *The Future of the Great Plains*. Report of the Great Plains Committee, Washington, D. C., 1936.

a population of 900,000 less than lived there in 1930.⁸

The cut-over region of the Great Lakes, which is suffering from a chronic pressure of population on the economic resources and accordingly can offer only restricted opportunities to its youth, has been among the areas of most acute suffering during the depression due to the severe unemployment in the mines and consequent dependence on poor land. The natural resources of the area have been forestry, minerals, and spots of good agricultural land. The forests have been exploited, the mines probably can never reach their former peaks of employment, and the farming on the poor soils away from the islands of good land condemns the operators and their families to poverty. The danger to the youth of this area is that they can do little more than shuttle between the urban centers and their poor homes in cyclic periods of urban employment and depression.⁹

The Southeast presents in a quantitative way a most dismal picture for the rural youth. According to expert opinion this area must remain dominantly agricultural,¹⁰ but if this is true and the number of youth mounts there must inevitably be an increasing pressure of youth on the land. Dr. T. J. Woofter, Jr., in writing on the surplus of youth, says, "Focusing attention for the moment on the young adult ages (15 to 25), we estimate by the age-group survival method that nearly three million young people matured into this group between 1930 and 1935 in rural districts of 11 southern states. Hardly a half million of these stepped into places vacated by deaths of their elders, hardly a half million

⁸ Goodrich and others, *op. cit.*, p. 243.

⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 175-201.

¹⁰ Howard W. Odum, *Southern Regions of the United States*, p. 405. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1936.

remained in school, about a quarter of a million are cared for in the increases in farms—mostly subsistence farms. This leaves about a million and three-quarters who remain in the farm home as casual labor or unemployed.”¹¹ With this situation prevailing, and if the area is likely to remain agricultural, one of two alternatives seems to face youth—remaining in poverty or wholesale migration, unless the rest of the country is to subsidize the area.¹²

*An Over-all View Shows the Problem to Be Staggering
But One That May Force Constructive Policies*

The localization of the problem presents a segmental picture, but the situation in its totality offers little more encouragement. In 1935, there were between five and five and one-half million farm youth and between three and one-half and four million rural-nonfarm youth.¹³ Dr. O. E. Baker has estimated that almost 90 per cent of the commercial farm products of 1929 were produced on approximately one-half the farms of the country.¹⁴ It would be very easy, no doubt, for the 50 per cent to produce all the commercial products. If this is true, then approximately one-half of the farmers are really not needed. Translating this into the youth situation and making a conservative estimate, one can say that the farms to-day have two million more youth than are needed to grow the commercial agricultural products.

¹¹ T. J. Woofter, Jr., “Southern Population and Social Planning,” *Social Forces*, p. 19, Oct., 1935.

¹² Data gathered by the National Resources Board in process of studies on population.

¹³ Estimate made in an unpublished manuscript on rural youth by Bruce L. Melvin.

¹⁴ O. E. Baker, *The Outlook for Rural Youth*, Fig. 5. Extension Service Bulletin 223, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Sept., 1935.

The rural-nonfarm population is made up of various groups: families in forest areas, persons in coal-mining regions, and other types of rural industries, agricultural village population, and the population in peripheries of cities. From these localities probably another million may be added to the surplus farm youth, making a total of three million rural youth out of adjustment in their home communities!

The Problems of Youth To-day Persist To-morrow Because Oncoming Youth Cannot Be Halted

The preceding description has been made as though the age-group 16 to 24, inclusive, were a cross-sectional segment of the population that could be described and analyzed apart from its relation to other population groups; but that is not enough. The youth problem is dynamic; it is ever changing. Each year there is the pressure on the older age-groups of those becoming 16 years old. If adjustments are not made within these years, the youth passing into older ages are likely to carry their poverty and warped personalities with them.

At the beginning of the depression farm youth were entering the productive age at the rate of about 200,000 a year.¹⁵ Since this was the approximate number who migrated to the cities in the five years 1930 to 1935, the yearly increase was almost five times as rapid as the migration. This is some indication of the speed at which youth have been piling up in rural territory.

¹⁵ From an unpublished manuscript by Dr. T. J. Woofter, Jr.

Rural Youth Are Handicapped Educationally in Comparison with Urban Youth

In accordance with the two approaches, individual and national, set forth in the introduction to this chapter, youth's educational situation is here examined in the light of social and economic adjustments which the individual youth have to make and the place the youth may fill in our complex and evolving democracy. Both these considerations lead immediately into questions of the availability of schools and programs to afford youth the opportunity for development.

Rural youth fall far short of urban youth in educational opportunities afforded them. "In urban areas (1931-32) one school child in four was attending high school, while in rural areas only one in seven of the school population was in high school. The difference is a product primarily of difference in opportunity rather than difference in native ability or even in interest."¹⁶ The fact that the rural youth do not have equal advantages with urban youth in an educational way is well recognized. Dr. W. H. Gaumnitz, of the United States Office of Education, in writing on the small high school, says, "It is believed that for the nation as a whole the figures cited . . . show that nearly half again as large a proportion of the city children are enjoying the advantages of high-school education as rural."¹⁷

¹⁶ *Human Resources*, pp. 55-58. A report submitted to the National Resources Committee by the American Council on Education, Jan., 1936, Washington, D. C.

¹⁷ "The Place of the Small High School in American Secondary Education," Chapter II, *Economical Enrichment of the Small Secondary School Curriculum*, Department of Rural Education, National Education Association, Feb., 1934.

The farm youth is at a much greater disadvantage than the village youth. In Wisconsin, where a study of the educational attainments of 9,279 rural young people in five counties was made, "70 farm young men per hundred did not enter high school; 70 village young men did," and "twice as many farm youth per hundred as village youth leave high school before graduation."¹⁸

The plight of youth is much more marked in the problem areas already discussed. "Actually we find that the educational and cultural opportunities afforded youth in the various areas that constitute the principal sources of internal migration are markedly below the national normal. The school term is shorter. Teachers are less adequately prepared. The percentage of children of school age is conspicuously less. Per-pupil expenditures for education are often less than half as great as in more favored areas. The curriculum is inferior.

"The need for change is perhaps even more urgent when considered from the standpoint of the immediate interests of the individuals. Young people now provided with the most meager educational advantages are the ones who in the largest numbers will find it necessary to seek occupational opportunity outside the communities in which they were born."¹⁹

If Vocational Training Points a Way Out, Its Program Is Not Sufficient

The statement quoted leads to another fundamental consideration—that is, the kind of training rural youth

¹⁸ J. A. James and J. H. Kolb. *Wisconsin Rural Youth, Education and Opportunity*, pp. 6, 7, Bulletin 437, Agricultural Experiment Station, University of Wisconsin, Nov., 1936.

¹⁹ Data gathered by the National Resources Board in process of studies on population.

need. Two types are being given: ~~the~~ general and vocational; the general largely conforms to a traditional pattern and the vocational is chiefly in agriculture. ~~x~~

A general critique of the educational system is beyond the province of this chapter. One quotation, however, serves to indicate a serious questioning of the adequacy of the schools as they do exist. "It is agreed by many that a farm boy of to-day who completes a high school with its vocational course in agriculture is no better prepared to meet the problems of farming and rural living than was his father who completed only the eight grades of the country school in his day. ~~The~~ The reason given is that the problems are more complex both technically and socially." ²⁰

Such criticism of agricultural vocational education is wholesome because with a strengthening of the present system the faults can be met in so far as agricultural education itself is concerned. The crux of the whole problem is: What vocational training should be given in the school? Vocational education in agriculture is the type most generally being promoted. Assuming that such a course were in all rural high schools, which it is not, and rural high schools were available for all rural youth, which they are not, still vocational education would be woefully inadequate for two reasons: almost 40 per cent of all rural youth are nonfarm and, for the sake of the youth themselves and for the national well-being, hundreds of thousands of rural youth cannot remain farmers. These need vocational training for non-agricultural occupations. The vocational situation is well summed up in the report on population being made by the National Resources Board.

²⁰ James and Kolb, *op. cit.*, p. 6.

There is no group in American life so much in need of training for occupational adjustability as young persons living in over-populated rural areas. An adequate program involves exploration of the opportunities for vocational adjustments within the rural communities, both with respect to the existing occupations and with respect to new economic enterprises that might profitably be developed. It also implies examination of the values that rural life has to offer, avenues of possible leadership in the community, and an attempt to develop a greater degree of cultural and economic self-sufficiency. Perhaps more important still, it should provide detailed and reliable information with respect to occupational opportunity in all parts of the country and thereby relieve youth of the necessity of relying wholly upon information provided by company agents, newspaper accounts, or the observations of the imperfectly informed relatives and friends. A realistic program of vocational education would seek to prepare youth for work in the immediate community but quite as much for work in industrial and commercial centers.²¹

Paradoxical as it is, the drain on rural communities due to migration is exceedingly costly, but at the same time if the youth remain, the youth problem emerges. Between 1920 and 1930, for every boy and girl who left after 15 years of age an investment of \$2,000 to \$2,500 made by the rural community was carried to the city.²²

A Low Educational Level and Rural Poverty Go Hand in Hand

Poverty and low educational attainments are closely associated. Rural youth in America in relief families

²¹ Data gathered by the National Resources Board in process of studies on population.

²² O. E. Baker, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

were educationally retarded. Indeed about 40 per cent of the relief youth 16 and 17 years of age who were in school were in grades below those in which they should have been according to their age. Also, youth in the four-year age-group 16 to 19 inclusive who were in rural relief families were not in school to the same extent as the youth in the more prosperous families. Though youth, taking the country as a whole, may have stayed in or returned to school during the depression,²³ this probably was not true of the rural youth in relief families. To go to school requires clothes and books. Youth in relief households have had little opportunity to possess either. It is not surprising that the depression retarded them more than they otherwise might have been.

Rural Youth Must Be Considered in the Formulation of National Public Policies

To meet the problems of rural youth adequately requires definite initiation of new policies of operation involving a closer coördination of the activities of both the permanent and emergency agencies now working in the field. Moreover, the permanent agencies coping with the problems of the individual youth, such as the schools with vocational education, as already indicated, and the Coöperative Extension Service of the United States Department of Agriculture, on the one hand, and the National Youth Administration and the C.C.C., on the other hand, also have, by virtue of their experiences, much to contribute in formulating policies and methods of meeting the youth problem. The United States Department of Agriculture with its two

²³ Emery M. Foster, "School Survival Rates," *School Life*, Sept., 1936.

subsidiary agencies, the Agricultural Adjustment Administration and the Resettlement Administration, has attacked the problem of agricultural prices and poverty on poor land. There yet remains the establishment of a policy that would prevent youth from becoming victims of poverty conditions.

Constructive agricultural legislation, aimed to bring equitable incomes to the farmers, to conserve and improve the soil, to extend credit and to take submarginal land out of cultivation, has been passed and put into operation within the last few years. These objectives are good; the future of American agriculture is dependent on their realization. The agencies promoting the various programs are now a part of or closely associated with the Department of Agriculture. Taking their activities in their totality we have, therefore, what may be termed the present agricultural policy. However, the person who thinks of accomplishments in the legislative field in relation to well-adjusted families living in relative security and in accordance with so-called American standards of living will inevitably inquire to what extent the policy, or one may say the philosophy, of rural life, that directed the passage of the various measures with which we are familiar, was one formulated with a vision of parity in education and health, and wholesome family, social, and recreational life for those who to-morrow will be the controlling population in American rural society. On their education and welfare partially rests the future of American democracy. Youth constitute the dynamic force for the life of to-day and to-morrow on the land. Will the raising of the gross income for agriculture lift one to two million youth

out of poverty? Will the checking of gullies benefit the young lives that have been stifled by retarded education and undernourishment during the depression? Will the resettlement of those who have started their families on poor land aid these thousands who are wanting to settle and have a home and security?

The Operating Policies of the Department of Agriculture Are Dominantly Economic

In his annual report of 1936 the Secretary of Agriculture says, "Agricultural policy draws its inspiration, not from the accidents of politics but from fundamental economic changes." Referring to the period of westward migration he states that the policy was "mainly one of non-interference with the private appropriation of land for use or misuse. . . . It was what the dominant forces of the country wanted and what the majority of the people at least tacitly accepted." An examination of the policies of the various governmental agencies recently established in close connection with the Department of Agriculture and now in operation largely confirms the accuracy of the Secretary's statement. The philosophy behind the measures apparently assumes that it is necessary first to meet certain economic situations before other dependent maladjustments can be remedied. But we must not wait too long. The agricultural measures promulgated to meet rural problems have little in them that pertains directly to the needs of youth, or toward fitting youth into a self-respecting, progressive, energetic rural life.

Dominant economic forces, like the Pharisee of old, leave human needs on the other side of the road. The

increase in the gross farm income from 1934 to 1935 was 17 per cent but for the operators it was 31 per cent. What of the increased income of farm laborers of whom youth make up a high percentage? Did the increased return go primarily to commercial producers? Indeed, more youth who were members of rural families on relief in October, 1935, were classified as farm laborers than any other occupation. At that time the original Agricultural Adjustment Act was in force; its objective was to bring about parity prices for agriculture. Neither specific nor implied was there inherent in the policy of this Act any purpose to effect parity of opportunity within agriculture as between commercial or self-sufficing farms nor was there anything that would, except by the most indirect route, touch nonfarm youth. An analysis of the figures giving the amount of money paid out by the A.A.A. shows that the states such as West Virginia and Kentucky with the largest number of economically handicapped youth were among the states receiving the smallest benefit per farm. However, the present Soil Conservation and Allotment Act is designed to conserve and improve soil fertility in both good and poor land areas, but what about the youth living on the small eroded farms during the interval in which the farms are to be treated for their ailment? In too many instances the farms are already too small to support their owners or renters on anything but a subsistence basis. The Act is also designed to attain parity income for agriculture. But with the many youth dependent on agriculture, especially as laborers, a natural question to ask is: who among the farmers will receive the returns?

There is another side, however, to the farm-labor

situation. On April 1, 1917, the farm-wage index was 112, using 100 as the annual average for 1910-14.²⁴ But there still remains the question, Can parity income for agricultural products bring parity of opportunity in education, healthful living, and wholesome activities necessary for personal development for the unneeded youth left on the farms? Undoubtedly the raising of agricultural prices has brought inestimable benefits to youth whose families have had farm products to sell. But the crux of the problem rests with those whose families have little to sell: agricultural laborers, sharecroppers, share tenants, and farm owners living on exhausted soils. These are the groups among whom are the largest number of youth per family. These youth probably constitute more than one-half the farm youth population.

Agricultural planning is part of the democratic process of putting the Soil Conservation program into operation and keeping it going. It is carried on through the coöperation of the A.A.A. and the Extension Service, the purpose being to secure the participation of farmers in the formulation and administration of the adjustment programs. In each agricultural county the plan is to have a committee of 10 to 20 members representing the various agricultural interests. Each committee undertakes to build a long-time program by determining changes needed in the local cropping system necessary to maintain soil fertility and prevent erosion.

Here and there word comes from the field that in the

²⁴ *Farm Wage Rates and Related Data, April 1, 1937, with Comparisons.* U. S. Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Agricultural Economics, Crop Reporting Board. News Release, April 15, 1937.

county-planning programs cognizance is being taken of the land resources and the future need for farm produce. Only one more step is needed, that is to plan for the adjustment of these potential producers to their opportunities and at the same time to assist the unneeded youth to adjust into other opportunities.

Indeed, the county-planning committees which are operating under the ægis of the A.A.A. and the Extension Service afford one means of attacking the problem. If their functions could be generally expanded to include social as well as economic planning the problems of rural youth would necessarily be included. Furthermore, planning for the proper use of land will inevitably lead into planning for the population on the land, and for assisting youth to leave poor land.

Such planning undoubtedly must follow since large stretches of rural territory now have a population in excess of that which the land can adequately support.

There are no legal provisions by which the A.A.A. can go further than at present into solving the youth problem. In the early stages of the A.A.A. program the man on a small subsistence farm was handicapped if he had to withdraw part of his land from the production of cash crops. That difficulty is being remedied by lending assistance to the diversification of crops.

The Resettlement Administration (recently renamed the Farm Security Administration), like the A.A.A., has gone in the right direction. In 1935-36, by helping approximately 650,000 farm families, many of whom were in cut-over and eroded submarginal territory, this organization indirectly aided some 350,000 to 450,000 youth. Likewise, if funds are loaned to the 500,000 families who are now at the bottom of the economic

scale, but who are too far down to secure a production credit or bank loan as Secretary Wallace indicated on January 14th of this year in his testimony before the House Subcommittee of the Committee on Appropriations, another 300,000 youth may be helped indirectly. The unit of assistance in each of the above mentioned types of activity, however, is the family. It is a well-known fact that youth have taken to the roads, leaving homes of poverty both in urban and rural areas since 1930. Could the restrictive policy of helping only the family have contributed to purposeless drifting from place to place on the part of the youth? In the interim report of the Resettlement Administration youth were mentioned, but as for any definite program being initiated for them, it is like Mark Twain's weather, we talk but do little about it.

Economic Determinism Alone Is Not an Adequate Philosophy of Social and Cultural Advancement

Policies guiding the activities of the Department of Agriculture, and concomitantly, the activities of the states, are inspired by "economic changes" and as a consequence, with only minor exceptions, are directed toward meeting economic needs. Moreover, there seems to be a guiding theory to the effect that if a general overall attack is made on economic problems, youth will make their adjustments not only in the economic system but also in the social organizations of their communities and in the establishment of families. It is doubtful if this guiding philosophy is sufficient.

The youth age is a point of attack for solving many rural problems. This is the time of life when individuals are striving to make their personal adjustments to mem-

bers of the other sex, to the family with themselves in the rôle of parents; they are struggling to get started in a life-work that will yield them economic security and they are taking their places in their communities within the social organizations either as assets or liabilities. They may be entering this phase of life either in good or poor health.

Instead of being resettled after they have made failures on poor land, youth might very well be assisted to settle on good land in the first place. The President's Committee on Farm Tenancy points out that of late men have been going down instead of up the agricultural ladder and that the increase in farm tenancy has been about 40,000 a year during the last few years. There is a glimmer of hope in the report of this Committee since the young person wanting to start farming is one of those mentioned as needing help.

The public by its vote and other manifestations of opinion is to-day deciding America's course of action for future decades. What America may be rests partially upon the policies respecting the youth problem that the nation ultimately adopts or fails to adopt. Furthermore, fundamental to its policies is the philosophy of rural life. In the past the principle of laissez-faire has dominated. This principle has been uppermost with respect to the forests, minerals, and soil. The programs now in operation for their conservation are necessary, but more necessary is a conservation policy for youth. The danger is that with the recovery rural youth may become the "forgotten man."

CHAPTER VII

NEGRO YOUTH

CONCERN FOR THE WELFARE OF YOUNG AMERICAN Negroes arises not solely from narrow consideration of the rights or wrongs of a racial minority. Only every tenth youth in the United States is a Negro. But the well-being of the nine is to a very large extent inseparable from that of the tenth.

The Future of Negro Youth Has Important Meaning for All Americans

This relationship prevails in every department of human welfare, but is nowhere more easily demonstrable than in the field of health, concerning which it has been aptly said that the germs of communicable disease "recognize no color line, obey no Jim Crow laws."¹ Some of the principal current menaces to the public health, especially to the health of young persons, are now to a considerable extent concentrated and entrenched among underprivileged Negroes, from whom they are constantly communicated to more fortunate persons of both races. The outstanding example is tuberculosis, which is known to be three times as prevalent among Negroes as among whites, and which has its highest rates of incidence in the years of youth and early adulthood, except when it develops as an occupa-

¹ Edwin R. Embree, "Education for Negroes—Divided We Fall," *American Scholar*, Vol. 5, pp. 312-22, Summer, 1936.

tional disease resulting from industrial hazards. The venereal diseases, also a scourge of youth, having their highest rates of incidence at about the age of 20, afflict Negroes in double the proportion of their occurrence among whites.

In Public Health and Sanitation All Must Advance Together

If any of these diseases were known to flourish among Negroes because of a peculiar and inherent racial susceptibility, their threat to the white population might be somewhat diminished, and ameliorative measures might be planned in accordance with that fact. But students of public health, with an increasing tendency toward unanimity, are convinced that it is erroneous to assume that these scourges follow and depend upon racial differences. It has not been proved that the factor of race alone accounts for the heavy morbidity rate among Negroes; but on every hand the evidence accumulates that disease goes hand in hand with poverty, ignorance, and absence of economic or educational opportunity in communities of either race.

In other words, public-health conditions are influenced by environmental as well as by biologic factors, and hitherto the latter have been overestimated at the expense of the former. This circumstance makes possible a more hopeful outlook not only for Negroes, but for the health of the American population as a whole, provided we exercise the measures of social control over the environment which are now known to be effective in raising public-health standards. With the increasing mobility and manifold interdependence of our population, we rise or fall more and more as a unit in matters

of public health. No one is safe as long as virulent afflictions rage among any portion of the population. We could not safely, even if we would, ignore the existence among us of a class of despised, diseased and neglected "untouchables." Sanitarians are agreed that the way to eradicate a disease is to attack it wherever it is found. Some of the most eminent have declared that the necessary next maneuver, and probably the last, in the battle to conquer tuberculosis is a frontal assault on its present stronghold among underprivileged Negro youth.

Needless to say, this involves not only medical measures, but also modification of the economic and social conditions which now operate powerfully to restrict Negro children and youth to substandard housing, unbalanced diets, and inadequate clothing, as well as lack of medical care.

Concentration of Negroes in the South Makes Negro Youth No Less of National Concern

The Negro population in the United States has always been heaviest in the southern states, and three-fourths of all American Negroes were still in the South in 1930. It must not be concluded, however, that the welfare of Negro youth is essentially a sectional responsibility or largely a regional problem. The rapidly increasing mobility of the population and the communication of ideas on the wings of the lightning, utterly oblivious of state and regional boundaries, combine to explode any such conclusion. If the South were an isolated compartment surrounded by a barrier impenetrable by men or by radio waves, then only could its problems be safely called exclusively its own.

In 1930 there were 11,891,143 Negroes in the United

States. Of these only 26.1 per cent lived outside the 12 southern states which contain one or more counties in which the Negro population constitutes a majority.² Such counties form an irregular but contiguous strip extending from East Texas through the deep South and up the Atlantic Coast as far as Maryland. This "Black Belt" includes no state as a whole, but covers more than half of the area of two—Mississippi and South Carolina. It corresponds closely with the area of cotton production, and its existence and continuance result from the ante-bellum plantation system and its modern prototype—the sharecropping system.

*Migration Has Created Negro Industrial Communities,
But Made Little Change in the Rural South*

Will the Black Belt continue permanently, or will the concentration of Negro population disintegrate and diffuse itself? Experience up to the present seems to indicate that though migration of Negroes out of the Black Belt has occurred on a sufficient scale to cause important additions to the colored population of northern industrial centers which have been its destinations, yet little effect has been produced toward reducing or diffusing the Black Belt. A million Negroes migrated North between 1910 and 1930, chiefly after 1916, as a result of the wartime demand for labor in factories; but during the same two decades there was only a small diminution of the percentage of Negroes in the population of the Black Belt, as is indicated by the following table: ³

² James S. Allen, *The Negro Question in the United States*, p. 19. New York: International Publishers, 1936, 224 pp.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 26. Table VI is adapted by permission of the publishers.

TABLE VI
POPULATION OF THE BLACK BELT, 1910-1930

<i>Census Year</i>	<i>Total Population</i>	<i>Negro Population</i>	<i>Negro Percentage</i>
1930	9,525,865	4,790,049	50.3
1920	8,968,132	4,806,565	53.6
1910	8,387,958	4,842,766	57.7

This northward migration was checked by the saturation of the labor market and the depression of the early thirties. Whether it will resume, and if so, how soon and at what rate of acceleration, cannot be foretold. It may be long before there is again as keen a demand for labor in northern cities as there was 10 and 20 years ago; but the divergency between standards of living in North and South, and the gradual but substantial increase of education among southern Negroes are factors tending to favor more migration. Probably the Black Belt concentration will in the long run continue to be lessened, but this is not to say that its dissipation is likely to be so rapid as to effect speedily any major alteration of the situation in that region. Two conclusions seem pertinent. The first is that the problems of the Negro and of interracial adjustment in the South are not to be solved automatically in the near future by heavy emigration. The second is that the diffusion of the Negro population, even though it be gradual and intermittent, makes the educational and health conditions and the general cultural level of Negroes in the South a matter of great concern to the whole country. It is not to be thought possible that any legal barriers to free interstate migration can be set up as a perma-

ment policy. Advancing speed and cheapness of transport and communication, as well as increasing education and mobility of the population, point to more migration in the future, especially if one section of the country remains conspicuously inferior in living standards.

Opportunity for Negro Youth in the South Is Prerequisite to Advancement of White and Negro Alike

Regardless of whether southern Negroes should remain in the South, as urged by such leaders as Booker T. Washington and Robert R. Moton, or whether they should seek opportunities in other parts of the country, it is clear that the improvement of economic conditions and cultural standards for the masses in the Black Belt must be a major national objective. This, in common with all other reasonable aspirations for the Negro, is no more imperative for him than for the white population living in the same area. Nothing is better known than that economic serfdom for the Negro means similar oppression for the masses of "poor whites," whose opportunities are inevitably kept down to a similar level by the economic and legal systems designed to oppress the Negro.

There are about 700,000 Negro tenant families on cotton plantations, and about 1,100,000 white families in the same status. The colored families include a total of about three million persons, and the white families about five and a half million.⁴ Over one-third of all

⁴ Charles S. Johnson, Edwin R. Embree and W. W. Alexander, *The Collapse of Cotton Tenancy*, p. 4. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1935, 81 pp. See also Thomas J. Woofter, Jr., and collaborators, *Landlord and Tenant on the Cotton Plantation*. Washington, D. C.: U. S. Works Progress Administration, Division of Social Research, 1936. 288 pp.

tenants, and over half the Negro tenants, are sharecroppers who furnish nothing but labor. The remainder are share tenants, who supply their own tools and work animals. The former are generally supposed to receive half the crop, and the latter from two-thirds to three-fourths. As a matter of fact, small meaning attaches to these fractions, for rarely does a tenant of either class receive more than bare subsistence. By long custom all the financial accounting is in the hands of the landlord, and in many cases the tenant never receives any cash, but only "credit" on his account at the landlord's store. The tenant is perpetually in debt from year to year, and many have debts of more than one year's standing. His family subsists on the salt pork and corn-meal doled out at the store, and often suffers from pellagra induced by the dietary deficiency. His home is a squalid and crowded hut, and his only clothing is of cheap denim. Mere animal subsistence on a comfortable level is beyond his reach. His status is infinitely lower than that of European peasantry.

*An Oppressive Agrarian System Must Be Modified.
There Is No Proof That Racial Characteristics Pre-
vent Improvement*

One must know something of the current system of cotton tenancy before he can fully comprehend the problem of the Negro in the Black Belt, or understand how closely the fortunes of whites and blacks are bound together in that unfortunate region. It has frequently been said that Negro youth are innately lazy, naturally shiftless and untrustworthy, and inherently depraved. It is important to know whether this be true. Intelligent

and intellectually honest white Southerners know that the plight of the plantation Negro is not wholly due to his own inertia. Before their eyes are the white sharecroppers caught in the same vicious system and suffering the same consequences.

Neither white nor black can rise to decent standards of living until some humane system of land tenure or land ownership supplants the present perversion of the ante-bellum plantation régime. The benefits of the cotton-reduction program of 1933 and subsequent A.A.A. measures inured to the benefit of the landlords and left the tenants worse off than before. It remains to be seen whether there can be formulated and adopted long-range and large-scale plans which will really promote the development of a self-sustaining agricultural economy on a decent level in the cotton belt. At best the fulfilment of any such program will require many years.

Meantime the cotton-belt Negro is at the bottom of a vicious spiral. He is ill-housed, ill-fed, ill-clothed, and shiftless partly because he is ignorant, and it is impossible for him to support and difficult for him to utilize educational opportunities because he is ill-fed and diseased. No observer has been heard to say, however, that the shockingly meager educational facilities now open to him are not worth many times their cost. Many of the most competent investigators are inclined to believe that the expansion and improvement of Negro educational facilities is the mightiest lever by which the South will be lifted toward higher economic levels. Edwin R. Embree says: "A rise in the standard of living of the Negroes is the surest way to prosperity for the South.

And education is the surest means of raising living standards.”⁵

Progress Has Been Made in Negro Education, But the Southern Segregated Schools Are Pitifully Inadequate by Modern Standards

In the two generations since Emancipation the percentage of illiteracy among American Negroes has been reduced from about 95 per cent to about 16 per cent to-day. But mere literacy is no longer acceptable as a minimum of education for American citizenship. Even now, although there are 2,500,000 Negro children enrolled in 25,000 elementary schools in the 17 southern states having segregated school systems, there are in the same states nearly 900,000 Negro children of elementary-school age who are not in school. Much of this non-attendance is due to absence of schools within reasonable distance of the children's homes, and lack of transportation facilities.⁶

In the southern segregated school systems 150,000 Negro youth are enrolled in some 2,000 schools of secondary level. This is a commendable beginning, but it is far short of the modern American ideal of secondary education for all, which has already been nearly achieved in some parts of the country, particularly in certain far-western states. In two states of the South—Arkansas and Mississippi—only 4.7 per cent of the Negro population of high-school age is actually enrolled in high schools. In five other Southern states the per-

⁵ Edwin R. Embree, "Education for Negroes—Divided We Fall," *American Scholar*, Vol. 5, pp. 312-22, Summer, 1936.

⁶ Ambrose Caliver, *Availability of Education to Negroes in Rural Communities*. U. S. Office of Education Bulletin, 1935, No. 12. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1936. 86 pp. 10¢.

centage is below 10, and in Missouri, where it is highest, it is only 48.9 per cent. That this situation is largely due to actual lack of high-school facilities is shown by many factors. In 15 southern states there are 230 counties, having a population of 159,000 Negroes 15 to 19 years of age, and having no high-school facilities for colored pupils within their boundaries. In the same states there are 195 more counties, with 200,000 Negroes of high-school age, which have no *four-year* high schools for Negroes. In all the counties considered, the Negro population is at least 121½ per cent of the total, and in some it is more than 50 per cent.⁷

In 1930 in 10 southern states, 576 counties were providing school transportation for white pupils, but only 156 counties offered any transportation for Negroes. More than 19,000 vehicles were used for white pupils, but only 432 vehicles were used for Negroes. The numbers of pupils transported were as follows: white, 736,000; Negro, 13,000. The funds expended for transportation were: for white pupils, \$12,500,000; for Negroes, \$200,000.⁸

Meager Salaries for Teachers, Short Terms, and Irregular Attendance Prevail

In Louisiana and South Carolina the cost of high-school teachers' salaries *per high-school pupil enrolled* was for Negro pupils less than half of what it was for white pupils. In 11 southern states in 1930 the average

⁷ Ambrose Caliver, *Secondary Education for Negroes*, pp. 24-30. Monograph No. 7 of the National Survey of Secondary Education. U. S. Office of Education Bulletin, 1932, No. 17. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1933. 121 pp. 15¢.

⁸ Ambrose Caliver, *Fundamentals in the Education of Negroes*, p. 86. U. S. Office of Education Bulletin, 1935, No. 6. Washington: Government Printing Office. 90 pp. 10¢.

annual expenditure per pupil in all schools for Negroes was \$12.57, while for white pupils in the same states it was \$44.31. These figures indicate that even for the small proportion of Negroes who are enrolled in secondary schools, shockingly inferior educational opportunities are offered. The inequality is further emphasized by the fact that even expenditures for white schools in the South are far below the national average, which in 1930 was about \$99 per pupil.⁹

The length of the school term varies greatly in different localities, but throughout the South it is generally shorter than elsewhere, even in white schools; and for Negro schools it averages from one to two and a half months shorter than the accepted standards in the same states and counties. Even during the short term (often less than six months in length), attendance is irregular on account of the fact that pupils are kept out for agricultural work at home, and many live so far from the school that inclement weather makes attendance difficult or impossible. This produces much retardation and a consequent heavy concentration of pupils in the first three or four grades, resulting in the acceptance of bare literacy as the maximum achievement of a large proportion of the pupils.

*The Southern States Are Not Able to Support Modern
Public Schools for All Children Without Federal
Aid*

The southern states are already spending as high a proportion of their public revenues for education as

⁹ Fred McCuiston, *School Money in Black and White*. Chicago: Julius Rosenwald Fund. 24 pp. See also Edwin R. Embree, *Every Tenth Pupil: The Story of Negro Schools in the South*. Chicago: Julius Rosenwald Fund. 12 pp.

do other states. In fact, it has been shown that Mississippi, for example, could not support a school system equal to those of half a dozen of our most fortunate states even if all revenues were devoted to schools, to the exclusion of all other public services. Nor could Mississippi raise enough revenue to support a modern universal school system under the most productive model state-taxing system. It seems that any hope of immediate or early extension of school facilities on a really inclusive scale in the South depends upon the receipt of financial aid from the national government.

Private Philanthropy Has Greatly Aided Negro Education, But Only as a Forerunner of an Adequate Public System

The most tangible form of philanthropic assistance to the Negro schools has been the stimulation of the construction of rural school buildings by the Julius Rosenwald Fund. Previous to July 1, 1928, this foundation had been instrumental in the erection of 4,138 such buildings at a total cost of more than 20 million dollars, in 14 states. About one-sixth of the cost was donated by the foundation, about one-fifth was in the form of gifts from Negro contributors, about 5 per cent from white contributors, and the remainder appropriated from public funds.¹⁰

The Anna T. Jeanes Fund has similarly stimulated the employment of Negro women supervising teachers in more than 300 counties of the South. The John F. Slater Fund has aided the development of Negro rural

¹⁰ Donald Young, (Ed), "The American Negro," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 140; pp. 219-223. Nov., 1928. 359 pp.

high schools by making small annual appropriations to county vocational and teacher-training schools which eventually tend to develop into regular high schools.

Both the Jeanes Fund and the Slater Fund have received large grants from the General Education Board, which has also made a very important further contribution to Negro education by paying the salaries of state agents for Negro rural schools, who are attached to the state departments of education in 14 states. This foundation has also made large grants direct to Negro colleges and schools. Up to December 31, 1937, its total gifts for Negro education aggregated more than 34 million dollars.

Philanthropic aid is not to be thought of as a regular and permanent substitute for public support, but rather as a means of financing pioneer efforts and demonstration projects for the purpose of showing what Negro education can do where given a chance. The activities of the foundations should not dull the sense of public responsibility, but quicken it.

*Equality of Educational Opportunity Does Not Exist
for Negro Youth in Northern Cities*

Segregation of the Negro race in schools is required by law in the "Border" states, and is also widely prevalent in varying degrees even in some cities of the North, where race prejudice fostered by real-estate interests generally confines the colored population to informally segregated residential districts where housing conditions are worst and overcrowding prevails.

In such situations Negro pupils in the public schools are exposed to the health hazards and economic limitations which inevitably result in a higher rate of absence

from school and a lower level of school attainment than that reached by the white pupils in general. Studies have revealed, however, that the range of intelligence and achievement is as wide among Negro youth as among whites, and that the two ranges overlap each other to a great extent. It is particularly important to know that about the same proportion of numbers of Negro and white children reached the highest level within the ranges of their respective races. This would seem to indicate that the actual range of abilities among Negroes does not approximate the dull level of mediocrity which a hasty scanning of the records of school achievement might indicate; but rather that the concentration of these records at the point of averageness or lower is a measure of environmental handicap rather than of inherent ability.

Negro Youth Can Make a Distinctive Contribution to the Common Welfare

Wholly aside from any questions of racial equality on intellectual or social planes, all will agree that Negroes possess natural endowments which supply a dash of variety in a predominantly Anglo-Saxon society. Few will deny that the Negro's capacity for tolerant good-nature, his penchant for mirth, his love of rhythm expressed in music or the dance, are elements well suited to counterbalance and soften the grimness, acquisitiveness, and tension which strike harsh notes in the symphony of American civilization.

For historical reasons well known, Negro youth at present face the future with heavy and at least partially unjust and indefensible handicaps: economic underprivilege, inferior educational opportunities, dis-

proportionate health hazards, and the manifold disadvantages and discouragements that grow out of the persistent prejudices which everywhere tend to be directed against a racial minority. No society, and certainly no democratic society, ever ultimately gains by the perpetuation of a pariah class. We cannot advance rapidly with one element seeking to impede the progress of another.

Education creates economic opportunity, conquers disease, and softens prejudice. It is of the greatest moment that educational facilities for Negro youth, as well as for their white contemporaries, be improved and extended.

CHAPTER VIII

YOUTH AND THE HOME

MR. PRESIDENT, WE HAVE BEEN GETTING A FINE technical education, but no preparation at all for what we consider one of the most important relations in life; we mean marriage. We know how to build bridges, but not a happy home life." Thus, in effect, spoke five older men students to the head of a large middle western university. They had a plan, and it was approved by the president. That was five years ago. Since then a course of lectures on marriage has been given each year with gratifying success. Then the girls of the university requested a similar course, which was duly arranged. Still more recently a series of lectures somewhat more elementary in nature has been developed for freshman boys. There is an increasing demand among youth for this kind of education.

It Is of Fundamental Importance That the Home Be Preserved

Outside the school, radical and conflicting ideas regarding marriage and the home are being freely proposed and discussed. Young people now cannot depend upon tradition as a means of dealing with life as they find it. Unless they gain some insight to guide them in their present homes and in the homes they are about to establish, they may spend much of their own lives in a murk of needless floundering and frustration.

Although other institutions have taken over some of the functions of the home, those which remain are becoming more crucial—the physical reproduction of the race, the care and basic habit-training of the young child, and the providing of personal security, enduring affection, and healthful emotional life, which for a majority of people is the source of mental health and happiness. Except for certain pitiful makeshifts, when these functions are not performed by the family they are not performed at all.

For large masses of people, family life may have to be relied upon for a greater proportion of life's satisfactions than formerly. While business men in "Middletown" a decade ago were still recommending the old gospel of industry and thrift on the assumption that there is "always room at the top," it was found that for 4,240 workers in industry in that city, there were actually only six opportunities per year for promotion to supervisory positions. Most youth can no longer hope through mere effort and industry to become a ranch owner or railroad president; they can reasonably expect a modest living with increased leisure, affection, and happiness within the family as their chief source of enduring satisfaction. While this new situation does not mean that we should abandon effort to make jobs more secure and more challenging, it does mean that life in the future may be less job-centered and more home-centered.

But Now Peculiarly Modern Difficulties Threaten Family Life

About 15 per cent of marriages among the more educated people of the United States, according to

recent studies, are definitely unhappy; not over half are really well adjusted.¹ Among city people of less education marriages appear still less successful. Moreover, unhappy marital relationships are a major cause of maladjustments in children. The more conspicuous modern difficulties of the family should here be considered, even though briefly.

There has been a trend in recent decades from autocratic paternalism towards democracy within the family; but there has been a decrease in the number of functions exercised by the home. It was inevitable that the industrial revolution should shift economic production from the home to the factory and that subsequent developments should transfer education to the school and recreational activities to various community agencies. A greater proportion of married women and mothers are now employed outside the home than a few decades ago.

The average size of the household changed from about six persons in 1790 to approximately four persons in 1930. Various local studies indicate that only 57 per cent of all families contain husband, wife, and children. The obvious principal cause of this general trend is the declining birth-rate. In 1800 the crude white birth-rate in the United States was 55 births per 1,000 population; but by 1933 it had become 16.1. Eighteen to 20 per cent of marriages remain childless. Especially important is the difference in birth-rates among various economic and cultural groups. A study in Iowa showed that, in counties having large percentages of young people attending high school, the birth-

¹ Joseph K. Folsom, *The Family, Its Sociology and Social Psychiatry*, pp. 436-438. New York: Wiley, 1934.

rate is low, while in counties with fewer young people in high school the rate is high. In one year during the depression, there were 233,822 children born to families receiving public relief.²

On the basis of recent marriage and death-rates, there must be 2.62 births per marriage to maintain a constant population. College graduates, professional people, men of science, and several other favored groups fail to attain, or just barely attain, this minimum rate. While idiots, imbeciles, and the hospitalized insane do not reproduce themselves sufficiently to maintain their stock, the higher grades of feeble-minded and the "dull" normals are multiplying rapidly.

The principal cause for the declining birth-rate, admitted by all well-informed persons, is the practice of contraception. There is evidence that it is employed by most married couples in professional and business groups, and by about half of those of the working class. From a business point of view the volume of the birth-control medication and device business in America is rapidly growing. The annual sales of one general kind of device, according to the estimate of a reliable medical committee, amount to 25 million dollars. Some firms have crews of door-to-door saleswomen; others send agents through factories and offices. Mail-order houses sell to rural districts.³

In many situations, it is of course socially desirable that birth-control be practiced occasionally to avoid children entirely, and often to assure their arriving at

² Dorothy Dunbar Bromley, "Birth Control and the Depression," *Harper's Magazine*, p. 564, Oct., 1934.

³ Letter from the National Committee on Maternal Health, Dec. 1, 1936; Elizabeth H. Garrett, "Birth Control's Business Baby," *New Republic*, Jan. 17, 1934, pp. 269-272.

desirable intervals. When there is planned spacing of children, they tend to be more highly valued and parental responsibilities are more keenly felt. However, birth-control knowledge and contraceptives are usually obtained surreptitiously; and often they are used unintelligently and unwisely among both the married and the unmarried.

In addition to all the present suffering due to poverty, crime, and disease—tragic enough in itself—hangs the specter of long-continued mediocrity of human existence if the big houses continue indefinitely to contain little families and the little houses to contain big families. Even if the two stocks are of equal hereditary qualities (not yet proved against considerable evidence to the contrary), the fact remains that much more than half of our children are reared in the worst of our 19 million home environments which contain children. This was not the situation in earlier times. It is an unexpected, illogical, and absurd by-product of modern “progress.”

*Incompatibility and Unemployment Are Among the
Serious Problems of Family Life*

Divorce has been continuously increasing in the United States; in 1929 there were 201,000 divorces, or one to every six marriages; in 1935, the estimated number was 218,000, which breaks all records. In addition, there are about fifty thousand cases of desertion per year, mostly among working people, and many voluntary separations. College graduates have a decidedly lower divorce rate than the average rate. It should be remembered that often divorce is the only wise solution of a difficult situation. It may be an indication of

progress that divorces are not condemned by society as much as formerly. In a large percentage of cases no children are involved. On the other hand, many incompatible couples refrain from getting a divorce because of their children. They often continue living together in ill-concealed hostility, misunderstanding, and conflict, with the result that their children develop a feeling of insecurity; maladjustments may occur which require many years to correct or which follow them through life.

The unemployment and poverty accompanying the depression period brought down the marriage rate from about 10 or 11 marriages per 1,000 population during the nineteen-twenties to 7.9 in 1932. Since then the rate has been rising. But the depression forced some one and a half million young people, who normally could have been married, to postpone this step.⁴ Every year, many young folks are frustrated in their normal inclination to found a home of their own. The male youth, remaining overlong under the parental roof, finds himself almost an alien there. His conflicts increase. Reaching the age when he should strike out for himself as a grown man, he remains a child.

Problems of Sex Behavior Are Especially Perplexing

"Petting," a term expressing various degrees of physical intimacy between boys and girls, ranges from mild forms, which even to many parents would appear quite unobjectionable, to so-called "heavy petting," which unquestionably presents serious dangers. The effects of

⁴Samuel A. Stouffer and Lyle M. Spencer, "Marriage and Divorce in Recent Years," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Nov., 1936, Vol. 188, p. 64.

a continuing relaxation of the older moral and religious taboos upon intimacy before marriage and of other recent influences, as revealed by numerous studies, may be summarized as follows: (1) more demonstration of affection between boys and girls of a spontaneous nature, and less of it due to group influence; (2) less soul-struggle on the part of the morally timid, who feel freer than before to do as they please; (3) more widespread acceptance (particularly by girls) of the "naturalness" of petting; (4) less extreme petting on first or early acquaintance but more "steady dating" with fewer inhibitions as to sex intimacy following long acquaintance. Pre-marital sexual relations may frequently be a result of "heavy petting." Working-class youth are likely to move suddenly from relative indifference to girls to overt sex relationships with little or no intermediate stage of petting.

The venereal diseases are family diseases. Syphilis is often transmitted from parent to child, gonorrhea from husband to wife. Either may result from pre-marital relations. There is twice as much syphilis as tuberculosis. Sir William Osler believed it to be the cause of 10 per cent of all deaths. It is the mad dog of communicable diseases, says the Surgeon-General of the United States Public Health Service. In New York State alone there are 25 times as many new cases annually as in Norway, Sweden, and Denmark where the combined population is approximately the same as New York. Gonorrhea is a disease of youth (one study of clinic patients shows more new cases among girls of 19 than of any other age). Prostitution, the cause of much syphilis and gonorrhea, increased from 1927-28 to 1932-33 in 41 cities of the United States out of 58 investigated.

But education, at least that on the secondary level, continues to deal with the problems of youth as if neither disease existed.

Abortions not only constitute a cause of the declining birth-rate and of childless marriages, but they also cause many deaths. There are annually about fifteen thousand deaths due to this cause, verified by autopsy, and probably an even greater number accepted by coroners as due to appendicitis. Estimates or guesses as to the abortion rate are not very reliable, but even the most conservative estimate—680,000 per year—is alarmingly large.⁵

The illegitimacy rate has increased since the war. In 1931 it was 34 per 1,000 births among the entire population. The evil resulting may be greater where the rate is relatively low, because where it is high, less stigma is attached to the unmarried mother.

Ignorance Is Found in Respect to Various Aspects of Family Life

The difficulties of family life, accentuated in modern times, are due in large measure to lack of training and ignorance. In purchasing, budgeting, and money management there is regrettable lack of knowledge among those both of the present and the rising generation. Lack of planning and ignorance of values are to be observed in a great deal of buying. Few husbands and wives purchasing goods on a deferred payment plan know that in many instances the interest actually paid is many times that which is implied in the adver-

⁵ Letter from National Committee on Maternal Health, Dec. 1, 1936; Peter Odegard, *The American Public Mind*, p. 53. New York: Columbia University Press, 1930.

tising matter. Many heads of families, to whom credit unions are not available, become victims of "loan sharks" of one kind or another. Some girls, before marriage, enjoy an income greatly in excess of that to which their husbands may look forward during the first years of their new life; yet many of them approach marriage with no idea of the sacrifices required. The problem of whether both husband and wife shall work is one about which many young people need skilled guidance, as well as problems of income, living standards, and the like.

Among parents and other adults, there is a kind of ignorance not always well recognized. Yet everyday observation testifies to its seriousness. This is ignorance concerning human nature and human relations. Here "common sense" is thought by many to suffice. But apparently many persons lack common sense, or the common sense which most people have leads them into trouble. To appreciate the importance of an understanding of human nature and of human relations one need only observe the attempts of parents to develop character in a child by comparing him unfavorably with a brother or sister, or to observe a wife trying to change her husband's behavior by repeated nagging, or of a husband endeavoring to increase his wife's love for him by threats and fits of temper.

Ignorance about the sex aspects of marriage is of several kinds—a surprising lack of factual information, partial knowledge, superstition, and misinformation. Much of the so-called information passed about from one youth to another may, of course, do more harm than good. Girls receive more instruction in the home than do boys, and yet, according to one study, only one-

fifth of all the women interviewed mentioned their mothers as sources of information. It is generally agreed that parents have been unable or unwilling to give their children much direct help in solving sex problems. While many young people confide more in their fathers and mothers concerning *most* problems than a decade ago, they feel that their parents' self-consciousness regarding sex is a bit pathetic, and they turn to their own age groups for confidences and information. Particularly unfortunate is the ignorance of youth regarding the esthetic and spiritual aspects of the marriage relationship.

Young people are not always conscious of their ignorance and their need for aid in regard to the economic aspects of married life. They are keenly aware of their ignorance of the sex aspects of marriage. "Their knowledge of 'life' has been gleaned for the most part from the remarks of fraternity brothers or sorority sisters who are usually about half wrong," writes the editor of one college paper, "not from the teachings of older people who know their subject. It's time they learned."

*Notwithstanding All the Difficulties, Modern Youth
Are Eager to Learn*

In the "Trial by Jury in the Case of Youth vs. Society," held in Orange, New Jersey, in 1935, Society was indicted "for indifference to and ignorance of the problems of youth in respect to marriage," and the following problems relating thereto: (1) inadequate instruction on the subject of choosing a mate; (2) allowing conditions to exist under which young people of marriageable age are unable to marry due to lack of

employment; (3) inadequate sex instruction.⁶ At the Christian Youth Conference of North America, held at Lakeside, Ohio, in June, 1936, delegates from 24 denominations in 44 states condemned their elders for their "almost total failure . . . to provide the education for marriage which every youth needs." A number of groups, in college and elsewhere, have gone further and requested their presidents and other administrative officers to provide courses of study on marriage.

The interest of young people in marriage and family life is real and vital. They want to marry and they want to be parents. A prominent psychologist summarizes evidence gathered during three recent years as follows: "From ninety to ninety-five per cent of the college women have answered that a career as a wife and mother was their primary aim, and that helping a husband in his career was more important than a career of their own."⁷ To have children appears increasingly to be the desire of boys and girls both in high school and college. One investigator reports that boys of high-school age seem to be quite as much interested in babies and children as are girls. According to a survey of college students, at least half of them would like to have children soon after marriage. In one small group of "prep school" boys, almost the entire number wanted to know how large an income is necessary for married life. These data may be discounted by persons skeptical of questionnaires, but even then they have considerable significance.

Young people are also interested in developing satis-

⁶ Wayland D. Towner, "The Case of Youth vs. Society," *Journal of Social Hygiene*, Oct., Nov., Dec., 1935, Vol. 21, pp. 331-348.

⁷ H. C. Link, *The Return to Religion*, p. 120. New York: Macmillan, 1936.

factory relationships within their present families. While often they are only vaguely conscious that maladjustment exists, and while many fail to realize that greater freedom in their home and social life implies greater responsibility, the experience of teachers indicates that boys and girls understand these matters when well-planned discussions are provided. Many are willing to see their parents' point of view and coöperate in family adjustments. They would be glad to substitute comradeship for dependence. In the home economics department of one high school, a group of adolescent girls met periodically in the evening, and an hour later the same evening a group of the mothers of these girls met. Neither wanted a joint meeting. The mothers felt that with their daughters present they might reveal their own perplexities and thus lose dignity; they wanted new means of control and punishment. The girls said in effect, "If our mothers were here they wouldn't listen to us any more than they do at home. We'd have the same old fights." But the girls showed a real desire for mutual understanding.

No one can listen to the questions of youth regarding marriage and parenthood and contemplate the ignorance and misinformation with which most of them are surrounded without being convinced that here, indeed, is a major concern and need of the boys and girls in our secondary schools and colleges, and of those who have left school. Each year approximately 2,200,000 of them reach the age of marriage.

Parents Also Are Eager for Aid

The parent-education movement was born out of the perplexities felt by modern parents in dealing with

their children in an urban environment, where the tried and tested rules of the past no longer work. For years, the movement has been steadily growing. In rural districts there is now much interest. On the edge of a hardwood forest four miles from the highway lives a family of husband, wife and two children, in a tar-paper, three-room house. The parents have attended an entire series of meetings. The first one occurred immediately after a blizzard. Drifts were too high for the old Ford, so father and mother put on snow-shoes and walked to the highway where they got a ride to the meeting at the county seat. The experiences of leaders in Parent-Teacher Associations and of church workers and others indicate that there are large groups of parents sensitive to their responsibilities and anxious for the advantages afforded by parent education.

From Several Points of View, Education Is Essential

Ignorance, of course, is not the only contributing cause of the difficulties discussed; and formal education is not the only remedy for the ills which beset modern family life. There is reason in the attitude of those who say that without better housing there is little hope for better family relations in the less privileged classes. Good family life requires better public-health facilities; a more just distribution of the financial burden of illness; a closer adjustment between income and size of family (whether accomplished by extra wages for larger families, birth-control, or other means); better facilities for recreation; more effective and humane legislation regarding marriage and divorce; and adequate economic security for all classes, however obtained.

Of course, education in a broad sense is a necessary

step in bringing about these other improvements. But education has a much larger and more direct rôle to play in the betterment of family life, a rôle which involves the entire school system as well as supplementary educational agencies. Supporting this point of view is the remarkable agreement between educational leaders, who are chiefly concerned with the development of individual personalities, and various kinds of social workers who are mainly interested in solving specific social problems. These two groups have come independently to the conclusion that specific education for family life is both possible and needful.

This education has been developing for some time—first rather slowly, and in recent years more rapidly. Some thirty years ago there was an interest in home economics, and to-day, in 75 per cent of our high schools, courses in this subject are offered. Later, research in child development made available subject matter and points of view now incorporated in courses of study for both young people and parents. The growth of mental hygiene resulted in child-guidance programs which contributed much to parent education. Child health work played an important part. The sex-education movement made available an important body of subject matter which has been incorporated in courses in the school curriculum and which has been used by many adult organizations in assisting parents. Finally, sociology and other social sciences provided data on the importance of the home in modern life.

Both Youth and Adults Must Be Brought into an Adequate Program of Education

The participation of the home is possible and urgently needed. Mothers and fathers themselves can and should be brought into the situation. With real children in their homes presenting concrete problems, they are anxious for aid. Parent education has been slowly developing for many years. It is worthy of stronger support. Educational opportunity should be provided for the parents of little children and for those of adolescents. The first group needs help in order that the kind of relationship may be established between parent and young child that will make it possible for the parent later to deal intelligently with that child when he reaches the "teen age." The second group (the parents of present-day adolescents) should be helped in order that, as far as possible, they may do their part in the education of their older sons and daughters for married life, understand better the present problems and the conduct of these older children, and coöperate with the school and other agencies which will have to assume most of the responsibility.

But when parents have maintained a home of disharmony, jealousies, and animosities, there may be little they can do to prepare their children for a happy family life. When they have neglected the early education of their children in respect to family relationships, they can scarcely be expected to take the initiative in planning adequately for the education of their adolescent children for marriage and parenthood. A large majority of present-day fathers and mothers (considering all social and economic groups) are either not com-

petent or not willing to undertake the task. That fact must not be forgotten. Since our immediate concern is the present-day adolescent, in most cases we cannot wait for their parents to be adequately educated; we must look primarily to qualified agencies other than the home to take the initiative.

The best place to reach young people who have not discontinued their schooling is in the high school. Here they are old enough to profit by education for marriage, and here they are found in far larger numbers than in the colleges. A much more difficult problem is to reach the seven million youth 16 to 24 years of age who have left school. Some of them are married, and most of the others will soon be planning marriage. Both groups are in need of help. It is especially unfortunate that no systematic program has been developed for this group.

*Recent Developments in Education for Family Life
Are Especially Promising*

There have been several promising developments during recent years in providing programs for young people in colleges and high schools, and for present-day parents in community centers of one kind or another. In the colleges, a course may be offered by a single teacher; less frequently perhaps a symposium is given by a number of specialists. A course may be given for credit or it may have the status of an extra-curricular activity. Among high schools also there are several kinds of courses. Perhaps the most practical are those called by such various terms as "Social Standards," "Social Living," "Personal Management," "Personal Regimen," and the like; but sometimes courses in Home

Economics and Biology are developed to include most of the necessary subject matter. Mothers and fathers of high-school students are giving their support to these courses. Many instances of gratitude could be cited.

In the education of parents, courses have been offered for years by Parent-Teacher Associations and similar groups. In some cases they have not been sufficiently comprehensive in scope; furthermore, only relatively few of them deal with the problems of parents in respect to their adolescent children. But current developments are promising.

Marriage and family counseling constitutes an important part of the educational program. This kind of service is now available in relatively few cities. It is provided by family welfare societies, special family clinics, churches, physicians, and other agencies and individuals.

The distribution of pamphlets and books on marriage and parenthood is a measure utilized by many community agencies. Many well-written, sound, and attractive publications are now available. For the use of parents four excellent magazines are published. Considerable general education for parents is given over the radio. Advice columns are published in many daily papers, much of the material being syndicated. In addition, many popular sex and romance magazines are eagerly read by millions of adolescents, as well as adults. These various commercialized enterprises should be given more careful attention by educators and civic leaders, as to both their possibilities and dangers.

Among the various agencies providing programs in education for family living are the churches, Young Women's Christian Associations, Young Men's Chris-

tian Associations, Parent-Teacher Associations, local units of the American Association of University Women, Social Hygiene Societies, Girl Scouts, Camp Fire Girls, Girl Reserves, 4-H Clubs, Family Welfare Societies, public health nurses and local units of the Works Progress Administration, as well as schools and colleges.⁸

Special Problems Retard the Development of Education for Family Life

One obstacle to progress in education for marriage and parenthood is the crowded condition and the rigidity of the school and college curriculum. These conditions must be corrected, of course; and there must be careful program planning and coöperation among teachers. An even more serious hindrance is a lack of well-trained teachers and other leaders. Here there are three underlying problems—first, the deep-seated personality difficulties of many teachers; second, the failure of administrators to select the best qualified persons; and third, the inadequacy of opportunities for training. The first difficulty can be remedied only gradually; the second is in large measure a financial problem. Facilities are already available with which to meet the third.

Among administrators and persons directly responsible for national, state, and city programs of parent education, about two-thirds have doctor's degrees. For leaders not yet so well trained, several institutions offer

⁸ Descriptions of a number of selected courses of study in colleges and high schools as well as of other types of educational programs will be published in the fall of 1938 under some such title as *Home and Parent Education*. Information regarding this book may be secured from the American Youth Commission, 744 Jackson Place, Washington, D. C.

unusually good facilities. For the rank and file of teachers, a more extensive array of opportunities may be found. In the general fields of education, psychology, biology, child development, home economics, and sociology, many courses are available in universities and colleges throughout the country, during both the regular school year and the summer session. For those who cannot arrange a year's leave of absence, a well-planned program for a single semester or a summer session will add substantially to their equipment.

In addition, students in schools of education who have not yet taken positions should be made aware of the progress now under way in this field; recent developments if continued should provide unique opportunities for service.

A consideration of all the facts leads clearly to the conclusion that much effective work in the education of youth for marriage and parenthood can be done by their parents, if the parents are properly equipped for the task, or if they can be prepared sufficiently early. Among the youth of the nation, only a small proportion receive the benefits of adequate instruction; but a sufficient number of schools are doing promising work to justify its extension among all youth *in school and out*. In view of the only alternative—continued ignorance and maladjustment among young people—it is becoming increasingly evident that we must stimulate a much larger number of schools and other social agencies to develop, cautiously and scientifically, various types of programs for the education of all youth in marriage and parenthood.

CHAPTER IX

YOUTH AND THE LARGER CITIZENSHIP

WHEN HARMONY IN THE HOME IS DESTROYED BY conflict, and a son cheats in school, and when in later life he wins an election by buying votes, is that a problem of mental hygiene, character training, or of citizenship education? When a mill owner begins the day at his factory with prayer, and asserts before a congressional committee that he has "never thought of paying men on the basis of what they need," is that a problem of religion or of ethics? When a dictator suppresses freedom of worship and makes a religion of nationalism, what kind of a problem is that? When the home, school, and church teach honesty and brotherhood, and when later the youth discovers that in the business world acquisition is respected above veracity and that the prevailing rule is to look after one's self first, under what head should that matter be discussed?

It is difficult to distribute these various kinds of problems into pigeonholes labeled "character," "religion," "mental hygiene," and "citizenship." While the home, the school, the church, and other agencies each have a sphere of opportunity and responsibility in which they are peculiarly competent, more coöperation is desirable than is evident. In fact, there is now an unfortunate lack of integration. As a result, basic conflicts have developed to the detriment of human personality and social welfare. It might be beneficial if the

agencies working among youth were at times to put aside the old terms "character education," "religious education," "mental hygiene," and "training for citizenship," and face unitedly their common task, which, for reasons soon apparent, may be described as the education of youth for the larger citizenship.

*Our Failure in the Past to Develop Good Citizens Is
Shown by the Behavior of Adults in Contemporary
Society*

Numerous writers commanding the respect of discriminating readers have issued warnings regarding the social crisis now upon us. "Humanity stands to-day in a position of unique peril. . . . Is man to be the master of the civilization he has created, or is he to be its victim?" inquires one of these men. "Unless education prepares future citizens to deal effectively with these great questions [of unemployment, family life, war, and so on]" says another, "our civilization may collapse." Alarming as many such statements may be, we are forced to admit that the present condition of our sick society is critical when we consider the symptoms.

In the political life of the nation there are evidences of indifference, ignorance, gullibility, and inefficiency. A study of non-voting in Chicago was made in 1924. It showed that, after a special effort to encourage registration, only 900,000 persons registered out of 1,400,000 eligibles. The number who actually voted was approximately 723,000. While there may be much more interest in presidential elections, there still remains an obvious lack of concern in state and local politics. In Chicago, habitual non-voting was found especially among young people in the 21 to 29 age-group. Among 6,000 non-

voters studied intensively, general inertia and indifference seemed to be the cause in 40 per cent of cases.¹

In sharp contrast to the indifference of voters is the enthusiasm many people show when under the influence of a demagogue. This is to be observed not only in Europe but in the United States as well. One need only recall the rapid spread of the Ku Klux Klan, the sudden growth of fascism in Louisiana, and the large followings enjoyed by similar movements in recent years. The gullibility of the people becomes especially serious when one considers the increasing effectiveness of propaganda. To-day we need not fear the man on horseback as much as the demagogue at the microphone.

The kind of patriotism found in some groups is quite as detrimental to good government as indifference and gullibility. There are many who profess to honor the Constitution, but who apparently have not read it in recent years, especially the first ten amendments. Among many of these "patriots" one can discover little loyalty to the ideals set forth in the Declaration of Independence. They salute the flag, they cheer enthusiastically at the mention of their candidate for office, they sing jingoistic songs with zest, but they are at a loss without a band. They seek to preserve the status quo and believe every original or liberal idea threatens the stability of government and that its possessor is a "red."

Inefficiency in government reflects the general indifference toward public affairs. Our civil service has not attained the dignity and attractiveness that one finds in Great Britain. There the service gets the cream of uni-

¹ Charles E. Merriam and Harold F. Gosnell, *Non-voting, Causes and Methods of Control*, pp. viii-x, 30, 251-255. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1924.

versity graduates. Here we believe that "to the victor belong the spoils," that "patronage is the price of democracy," that almost any reasonably intelligent person can qualify for government positions. This country, the Commission of Inquiry on Public Service Personnel concluded, pays less attention to the education of its civil servants than any other major nation.

*In Business, in Private Life, and in Religion, as Well
as in Politics, Are Indications of Inadequate
Standards*

In business life there are many recent revelations of our failure to develop good citizens—the defalcations of bank presidents; the exploitation of industrial workers, particularly of women and children (such as the payment of ten cents a week to girl apprentices in fly-by-night sweatshops);² the exploitation of juvenile prisoners; the immense fortunes built up as a result of the World War, and the recently revealed scandal of the international armament makers. In the pursuit of profits, writes the president of one of the great department stores of the United States, business "has outraged justice. It has been unspeakably cruel. It has ravaged and robbed whole communities." During the ten years prior to the investigation of the Senate Committee on Banking and Currency in 1933, 25 billion dollars worth of worthless stock was sold to American investors.³ "The average politician," says John T. Flynn, "is the merest amateur in the gentle art of graft, compared with his brother in the field of business."⁴ Can we be surprised,

² *The Literary Digest*, June 11, 1932.

³ *Financial Chronicle*, May 6, 1933, p. 3043.

⁴ John T. Flynn, *Graft in Business*, p. 55. New York: The Vanguard Press, 1931.

then, to discover that in many colleges there is evidence of graft when the senior class awards a contract for publishing its "annual," and that cheating in examinations is widespread? Several large universities, as is well known, have recently abandoned the honor system.

In private life, many practices are to be observed which are not conducive to stability of character. Gambling is widespread. In one city alone, slot machines used for gambling take in ten million dollars annually. Betting on race horses attracts thousands of devotees—more who patronize the "bookies" in the cities than who actually attend the races. Occasionally, one wins a large sum of money in a lottery or on a horse. Thus many youth are lured by the hope of winning wealth without arduous labor. Even when gambling is not attempted, a great many are looking for a "soft job" which will never afford the satisfaction of hard, honest work.

The use of alcoholic beverages has increased substantially since the repeal of prohibition. The business has now reached a total volume of at least two billion dollars a year. Whatever one's attitude may be toward moderate drinking, one cannot look complacently upon the intemperate use of alcohol. Its excessive use as a cause for uninsurability among persons under 30 years of age applying to one life insurance company increased from 1932 to 1936 by 183 per cent. The Coroner of Cuyahoga County, Ohio (which includes Cleveland) reports that, in 110 fatal automobile accident cases tested, 45 per cent showed the presence of enough alcohol to cause intoxication in most persons. Alcohol weakens the inhibitions, including those which control sex conduct. And however liberal one may be in this realm of human

relations, one cannot be unconcerned regarding the kind of promiscuity which keeps alive commercialized prostitution and is largely responsible for the spread of venereal diseases.

In the field of religion, we have not been loyal to the faith to which most of us are nominally adherents.⁵ "We have become so naturalized in our insanities of hate and competition and unbrotherliness and injustice that we are afraid of the sanity of love and coöperation and brotherliness and justice." This is a highly respected Christian speaking—E. Stanley Jones. He continues in his book, *Christ's Alternative to Communism*, "Could anything be more insane than the spectacle of half the world overfed and the other half underfed with enough for everybody in our very hands? And yet we are afraid of the sanity of a just distribution! Is there anything more insane than the dog-eat-dog method of competition? And yet we are afraid of the sanity of coöperation!" Largely because we have not made religion vital, youth is turning away from the church.

A particularly serious menace just now is the recent and rapid growth of Nationalism. The religion of Nationalism is winning followers because it dares to ask and expect a degree of devotion which Christianity has not been bold enough in recent centuries to demand. "It is by making these large demands on human nature," writes Arnold J. Toynbee of the University of London, "and not by offering people the license to do as they like and live at their ease, that the post-war paganism has been winning its masses of converts." The

⁵ In our treatment of religion in this brief discussion, we have confined ourselves to Christianity since, at least nominally, the nation is predominantly Christian. Judaism and other religions have much in common, of course, with Christianity, especially as it is here treated.

followers of Nationalism believe in something greater and higher than themselves which works in human life towards the creation of a perfected society. Communism and fascism have won a degree of faith and devotion among their followers which have the qualities of real religion.

Emotional and Mental Disorder, Delinquency and Crime Are Evidences of the Failure of Society to Educate Its Youth

There were 466,045 patients under the supervision of mental disease hospitals in the United States at the end of 1935, slightly over 10 per cent of them being on parole or otherwise absent. A more disturbing fact is that a much larger number of persons outside of hospitals have nervous and emotional disorders. Many of these disorders might have been prevented. These various conditions not only cause suffering to individuals and their families; they are also conducive to antisocial behavior. It is often the depressed, embittered, or unstable youth who most quickly follows the demagogue; his maladjustment often leads to delinquency and crime. There are 200,000 persons in our prisons, jails, and reformatories, according to a report by Nathaniel Cantor, published by the University of Chicago Press, and perhaps 300,000 or 400,000 more lawbreakers wanted by the police. "Estimates of the money cost alone of crime run all the way from one billion dollars to eighteen billion dollars a year. Even if we take the lowest figure, that's something like forty dollars for every family in the United States." Dividing our prison population into two-year groups we find that the "largest group of all will be young men and women nineteen

and twenty years old. It's horrible to think of our robbers and gangsters as being about the age of young men and women in college, but that's the situation."

Society Has Not Educated Youth for Democracy in the Past, and Is Not Doing So Now

No institution has taught most contemporary adults how to think clearly about the problems of democracy. Confusion about causal relations, the tendency to generalize hastily, the disposition to act first and find a reason afterwards, and similar faults in thinking are responsible for much superstition, prejudice, and stupid unjust conduct. Because a man criticizes certain features of the Constitution, he is charged with being unpatriotic, when as a matter of record he is more devoted to the country than are his critics. Because another man is a Russian, he is called a dangerous radical, even though he is a great scientist with no interest in government. A long list of superstitions believed by preparatory school students was disclosed by one recent study; and another investigation indicates that "the average high school student is obsessed by 22 utterly absurd superstitions." Twenty-six science teachers in almost as many states were asked how they train their students to do scientific thinking. The answers seemed to indicate that many do not do so; some said that it is not possible to train a student to think. With dictators in all parts of the world telling their subjects *what to think*, it is of importance that in a democracy future citizens be taught *how to think*.

Recently 120 fairly representative third- and fourth-year high-school students were asked, "What does democracy mean to you?" Said one, "I don't know"; and

another, "Democracy means that the world has been made free from it and has been taken over by a group of people called democrats." A large majority revealed a surprising degree of ignorance. A similar group were asked, "What is a demagogue?" Almost all of them frankly said they did not know. One student replied that a demagogue is "One who doesn't believe in God"; another replied, "A demagogue is a container"; still another, "A teacher of democracy." Over 20 additional answers were likewise ridiculous. Of 850 representative superintendents of schools responding to a recent inquiry, 98 per cent agreed that the schools had an obligation to deal with fundamental social problems; but only 11 per cent reported that the social studies as taught under their direction provided a reasonably thorough study of such problems.

We have not forgotten the priceless contributions the school, church, and home have made to American culture and the superiority of our institutions to those of many other nations. But now we have been called upon to examine a sick society and to ascertain, if possible, some of the causes for its critical condition. At such a time eulogy seems superfluous. We, therefore, continue without delay, with the kind of informal analysis which may help point the way out of our present predicament.

Conflicting Standards Are Partially Responsible for Our Failure

Conflicts which consist of a well-recognized clash between good and evil and require a decision in favor of one course or the other are inevitable and desirable. They are essential to growing up, to the attainment of

character. But some conflicts cause confusion. Often it is difficult to know which of several ways is the right one, and to make a clear-cut moral decision. One kind of conduct appears acceptable in one environment, but is condemned in another. Many a boy has three vocabularies, Hugh Hartshorne reminds us, one for Sunday School, one for the dinner table, and one for the alley. And he never mixes them. That, perhaps, is a predicament at which one may smile. But consider the case of a man who is affectionate and attentive as a husband and father, exacting and unscrupulous as a business man, uncritical toward corruption in his political party, and yet believes in God and is an earnest churchman. Such a state of affairs does not foster the integration of personality in the man; it may be confusing to his son.

Adolescents may have considerably more difficulty than the boy with three vocabularies in adjusting themselves to conflicting standards. In earlier decades when life was less complex, many attained an integrated personality centered about some absorbing job or avocational interest. In the present confusion, we should not be surprised if youth are not loyal to high ideals in their aims and conduct. What are some of the spheres of life in which conflict appears most serious?

In the field of moral conduct many youth are particularly perplexed. Says one student, "Every day we see standards changing. People do and are praised for things we believed were considered wrong. In the books we read, serious subjects are discussed very frankly and daringly, and often the author's viewpoint is radically different from what we considered right. To a young person this is very upsetting and confusing."

"You send your child to the school master but 'tis the school boys who educate him," wrote Emerson. But to-day many forces conflict with the teachings of the school master. Moral standards upheld in school may be largely offset by the activities of politicians; the teaching of ethics in business in an economics class may be entirely negated by the practices of leading bankers; the combined efforts of home, school, and church may be neutralized in large measure by motion-pictures, cheap dance halls, pool rooms, lurid newspapers and salacious magazines. Although the general attitude of the public toward crime is changing, it is still not conducive to the best citizenship. Two book publishers, a magazine, and a newspaper joined forces in 1934 and offered a \$7,500 prize to the writer who would produce a novel "with a character worthy of taking a place among the great, lovable, crook characters of all time."

Shall Success Be Measured in Terms of Money or of Service to Society?

In choosing a vocation, some young people experience conflict between an impulse to be socially useful and a desire for economic security. A high-school boy of 18 was greatly stirred by the ravages of the influenza epidemic in the winter of 1918-19. "Thousands of people were dying," he writes. "What hurt me most of all was the death of the smaller children. . . . I resolved, if it were possible, to help check this disease. I distributed circulars to many hundreds of people and in this way they became acquainted with the cause and treatment of the 'Flu.'" This boy planned to become a certified public accountant. While a large proportion of high-school students have definite impulses to make

themselves socially useful, in many cases the vocations they choose do not harmonize with these larger interests. Often it is not practicable, of course, for them to find such opportunities; but they might more frequently than they do. A study of hundreds of cases showed that 70 per cent of the vocations tentatively chosen did not conform to the social ambition reported.

The conflict between greed and social usefulness is a matter of increasing perplexity to youth. At a conference of young people in 1934, attended by representatives of 48 Protestant denominations and of 10 million youth, a "Statement of Christian Conviction" was adopted, which recognizes this conflict. "While Jesus taught the law of coöperation and good-will, we live in a social order that sets every man's hand against his brother; hatreds of race and nation and class divide us. Professing to follow the Prince of Peace, we blindly follow the militarists from one war to another, emerging from each with ghastly losses and nothing gained." Two years later at a similar conference, the following statement was presented as a "plebiscite"—"We are driven to the conclusion that the present economic order is anti-Christian: a ruthless, competitive, profit system cannot be reconciled with the Kingdom of God as revealed in the life and teachings of Jesus." The vote on this statement was as follows: yes—432, no—9, doubtful—46. Similar conclusions are set forth by leading thinkers in religion. E. Stanley Jones is persuaded that "Christianity cannot fit into a competitive order. . . . Christianity is now looked upon as an impossible, unworkable method. It must be confessed that it is—under this order."⁶

⁶ E. Stanley Jones, *Christ's Alternative to Communism*. New York: The Abingdon Press.

*The Conflict Between Democracy and Dictatorship Is
Becoming More Acute*

The conflict which most concerns Americans at the moment is that between the philosophies of dictatorship and democracy. The gulf between the two is deep and wide. On the one hand are those who assume that human beings have individual minds, wills, and aspirations, as Hamilton Fish Armstrong⁷ conceives the matter, "and that they have capacities for improvement, even if very slowly; and that they should be allowed to use their minds, exercise their wills, and manage their own affairs as a means of learning how to do these other things better." On the other hand are those who have never accepted the democratic concept of human progress, or who have discarded it because such progress is of necessity exceedingly slow and undramatic. "They prefer," says Armstrong, "systems revealed to infallible men or groups of men imposed and enforced by decrees and bullets, and considered permanently immune to criticism, first because infallible men do not need criticism, secondly—and more simply—because they will not tolerate it." The struggle between these two opposing concepts will permit no compromise.

To youth, the issue is vital. Because they have not been educated to understand at what cost through the centuries freedom and democracy have been won, and because they have never been encouraged to consider the relative values of security, efficiency, and freedom, they are all too ready to follow any leader whose promises of action, dramatic adventure, and economic se-

⁷ Hamilton Fish Armstrong, *We or They*, p. 4. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1937.

curity are sufficiently alluring. While we may escape a fascist revolution, some sober-minded, competent observers of the American scene see little promise of order ahead. And, for every hundred youth who will respond uncritically with their first votes to the appeal of the demagogue, a thousand will become sorely confused as the conflict becomes more acute. Those who discern the more ethical and spiritual aspects of the issue may be able to play a more spirited and effective part in the inevitable struggle.

Here, then, are great conflicts in which contemporary youth find themselves. On one hand, we see force, suppression, exploitation, and greed, boldly upheld in fascist countries, and in the United States also wherever capitalism has run rampant. On the other hand, we find freedom, brotherhood, coöperation, and service as ideals of conduct under democracy and Christianity. The latter, as set forth by its founder, is a more radical faith than democracy; but in general the two are natural allies against fascism. On the outcome of the struggle hangs the fate of many millions.

It is becoming increasingly evident that we need a larger pattern of citizenship—a concept that will include the adjustment of one's self to the realities of life as the surest protection against unsocial and unlawful conduct; honesty and fair play in dealing with one's fellows; a live interest in public affairs; a willing and coöperative spirit; an appreciation of the priceless value of freedom; and an active belief in the brotherhood of men. In a democracy and in a Christian nation, a concept less inclusive will not suffice.

*Notwithstanding All the Failures of Society and the
Confusion of Modern Times, Young People Are
Potentially Loyal to Personal and Social Ideals*

Evidence has been repeatedly presented indicating that youth are fundamentally decent, honest, coöperative, devoted to the common good, and faithful to spiritual ideals.

"I hope to bring about the reform of all corruption in politics."

"I have the ambition of wiping every gangster and thief off the face of the earth."

"I have seen and heard of so much suffering that every thought that I have is leading me on to offer my services to the human race. . . . I feel that I can and must take a medical course if there is a way at all."

Thus write three older high-school students, anonymously—not to please their teachers. Similar statements were made by hundreds of other such students in connection with two studies conducted with the aid of the United States Office of Education. Approximately one-half of them reported social ambitions of a very real kind and stated in addition that they had participated directly or indirectly in some kind of charitable, religious, or social work. When youth become devoted to a social cause, there is likely to be little difficulty about their personal morals.

Most writers on the psychology of adolescence agree that at this period of development, religion makes a new appeal. The lack of interest in church work now observed among young people is due more to an absence of vitality in organized religion than to the attitudes of

youth. For evidence of their potential concern, one need only turn to the earnest following among young people of leaders with an effective program for the promotion of the more abundant life. College students apply years in advance for the privilege of working for a summer with Dr. Wilfred T. Grenfell in Labrador entirely without monetary compensation. This is the time of idealism—or it should be. Youth will respond to a clear call for service. It is for us to determine whether that call comes from a vital Christian church or from a totalitarian state.

The United Youth Program, already referred to, is injecting a new energy into religion. It is stimulating many groups throughout the country in the realistic discussion of personal and social problems, including the use of beverage alcohol, preparation for marriage and home life, creative use of leisure time, building a Christian economic order, discovering a new patriotism, and building a warless world.

A new board of editors of *The Yale Daily News* early in 1937, wishing to define their attitude toward those things they consider important in the world to-day, wrote as follows: "First . . . we are Christians. We feel the need of stating so explicitly what many might take for granted because we are convinced of the reality of the struggle between Christianity and the new Western creeds. Perhaps this struggle will be confined to Europe where it is already in progress; perhaps not." Discussing Communism, as well as fascist leaders, they conclude, "We oppose their authoritarian or totalitarian states in any form."

Young people are eager to translate their desires into action. They want something to work for; many seek a

cause for which to fight. Youth are impatient of caution. Their cynicism, where there is any, is a pose. They welcome the possibility of change. Many have abounding faith in their capacity to reform the world. They are willing to endure hardship, and hard physical toil as well. Consider the fine work of the C.C.C. boys in fighting forest fires, building trails and roads in national and state forests, improving national parks, draining swamps, and planting trees and building dams for the prevention of soil erosion.

Young people in the high schools and colleges are doing somewhat more than adopt resolutions and pronouncements. A "Hi-Y" group in New Jersey during a recent strike devoted four meetings to discussions of the struggle between capital and labor; at one meeting a union organizer spoke, and at another, a representative of the employers. In Michigan, a similar group spent an entire day visiting courts, welfare stations, and relief agencies. A large number of organizations of young people provide baskets and gifts for needy families at Christmas time. The members of the Junior Red Cross foster international good-will through a system of correspondence and the exchange of printed materials. Among the colleges, there have been several nation-wide demonstrations during recent years against war; in the last one, it was claimed, 700,000 students participated. Liberal and radical groups hold discussions on public questions; members collect funds for strikers, speak on street corners, distribute literature, act as ushers at meetings, and picket at times. The history teacher of one university decided to run for the office of police commissioner, but told the members of his class that the machine would probably defeat him.

They thought differently and organized a campaign that resulted in his election. A model Senate was conducted at one college in 1935 with delegates from 26 colleges and universities; and an association was formed to arrange similar gatherings periodically.

"As far as I can remember," says the president of a radio corporation, "every major discovery in radio has been made by a boy under 21. Most of them are about 18 when they discover some epoch-making principle."⁸ Youth may show skill in the solution of our social problems also, and in social invention, if we develop the techniques for focusing their attention on these problems. Such procedure, modern educators believe, is the best kind of education.

The School, Church, Home, and All Community Agencies Must Perceive the Organic Nature of Social Life

A unique condition confronts us. On the one hand are many manifestations of our failure to develop intelligent, loyal citizens, and disquieting evidence of conflict and confusion; while on the other hand are rapidly growing groups of youth increasingly conscious of the emergency and increasingly eager to do something about it. The present situation presents grave responsibility and enviable opportunity to all agencies working with young people.

School, church, home, industry, and community agencies have brought us a culture superior to that of most other nations. In this discussion, we should be constantly reminded of our indebtedness to teachers,

⁸ Eugene F. McDonald, Jr., "Teeners," *The American Legion Magazine*, July, 1937, p. 7.

ministers, and all high-minded, devoted leaders in business and civic affairs. Many of them are keenly aware of our present critical situation. Various difficulties, however, stand in the way of progress; among them, the influence of reactionary groups (in school, church, and other institutions) which exercise financial control, and our failure thus far to bring about an orientation of social programs built upon ethical and spiritual ideals.

No one agency, obviously, is responsible for our present plight, and no one agency or particular group of agencies should be looked to for a way out. Furthermore, we should not attempt too great a differentiation of functions, and say that the school is responsible for citizenship education, the church for religious education, and so on. Each should consider anew its relation to the present situation and determine for itself how it may most effectively operate. Clearly, there are tasks too long evaded which must now be faced—each of them by almost every agency—which, for purposes of convenience, may be called character education, mental hygiene, religious education, and citizenship training.

Character development is now considered "more essential in the life of the individual or the nation" than at any other time, writes Harry C. McKown.⁹ The "present demand for improved training for ethical living and the general acceptance of the development of character as the main objective of the education process" are the results of at least three factors, he says, two of which are the following: first, a new emphasis upon personal freedom accompanied by a release from the

⁹ Harry C. McKown, *Character Education*, p. 456. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1935.

rigid standards of earlier days; and second, the necessity of training for living in highly complex life situations.

Mental hygiene is becoming a close ally of character education, states the report on Recent Social Trends, the one tending to merge with the other in stressing total personality development and emphasizing the importance of social adjustments and emotional experience in the child's education. The psychologist trained in mental hygiene and the psychiatrist pave the way in home, school, church, and community so that the youth may really grow up. They are particularly alert for indications of arrested personality development. They would warn all social institutions that the youth should not have attention lavished upon him, that dealing with problems is essential to development, that recreations which provide only passive pleasures are inferior to those which require activity and skill, that conflicts in the environment which confuse are to be avoided if the youth is to attain integrated character.

Religious education is facing what William James called a "forced option." Will it or will it not seek to apply the principles of Christianity to social issues? As long as ideals are stated in general form, George A. Coe reminds us, nobody objects to them. "The law of love is entirely acceptable to the exploiters of their fellows, even to the industrial exploiters of children, as long as we do not go on from the general principle to the details of application. Will religious education go beyond generalization?" John MacMurray believes that we should define our Christianity in such a way that it will determine for us a clear program of action. If we cannot do so, he says, "We ought without hesitation to

reject Christianity completely and find another faith to fight for.”¹⁰

The task of citizenship training seems at the moment to be the most pressing. The simple, tragic truth is becoming increasingly clear—we have not educated youth for freedom and democracy. They regard democracy as an achievement won years ago and now handed to them on a silver platter, to be enjoyed without further effort. We are just beginning to realize that real democratic government cannot be attained merely by adopting a constitution and providing the machinery for voting. For, as John Locke said 200 years ago, “Government can be democratic and stable only when it is based upon the consent of the governed and that consent is given only when the people understand their problems and approve intelligently the acts of their representatives in government.” No task at the moment appears more urgent than the thoroughgoing education of youth—and all the people—for freedom and democracy.

An efficient approach to these problems, it may be said, will require much money. It will. But those who hesitate will do well to consider such facts as the following: public education in the United States is costing us only nine cents a day per person of voting age; and we are spending little more, if any, for education than for tobacco, confections, ice-cream, and soft drinks.

¹⁰ John MacMurray, *Creative Society*, p. 15. London: Student Christian Movement Press, 1935.

*There Should Be Developed a National Philosophy to
Enlist the Loyalties of Youth*

The great organized social institutions, school and church, may immeasurably improve their present programs; the home also may become a far greater constructive force in the lives of adolescents. Yet, even then, the goals of education for the larger citizenship will not be attained. Two obstacles stand in the way—there is no agreement among social, political, and economic institutions in respect to a national philosophy; and in the local community, there is lack of harmony among the various forces which determine the attitudes and conduct of growing youth. We need a new formulation of American ideals to which all may subscribe, and a new sense of responsibility among all groups in the local community in the training of youth, a new willingness to subordinate selfish interests to the development of the larger citizenship.

Proposals for a new statement of American ideals have been advanced several times in recent years. A special committee of the National Education Association actually prepared a statement of "Social-Economic Goals for America." It did not win wide support, partially because it was not publicized. In 1936 Charles W. Taussig of the National Youth Administration recommended that we "restate the democratic ideal in terms which will give to it at least some of the dynamic and dramatic force which has been evidenced by fascism and other forms of absolutism." We must revitalize the democratic ideal of freedom, he said, "into a democratic and militant philosophy in place of a passive and de-

fensive one." More recently, a prize for such a pronouncement was offered by one of the leading monthly magazines.

Here is a task of extreme difficulty. Competent writers may prepare formulations; associations of educators may appoint commissions to draft new statements of American ideals. But to develop a pronouncement which will have the support of all social, political, and economic interests in the nation is quite a different matter. That, however, must be the objective. Its preparation will require the coöperation of political scientists, economists, sociologists, engineers, industrialists, statesmen, physicians, prophets, priests, and philosophers. If all participate, as they must, the formulation will of necessity be an extensive process of education within the group. Extended discussion will be indispensable. Sharp clashes of conflicting ideas should be expected. A great devotion to the common welfare will be required, together with tolerance, sympathy, and brotherhood.

And when a new credo is eventually completed, a nation-wide campaign of education will be necessary; for it should be systematically distributed and discussed by small groups and large audiences in schools, colleges, and churches, in the halls of industry, and wherever people assemble, by boys and girls and men and women. A draft of the new Russian Constitution prepared in 1936 was discussed in 527,000 meetings, attended by 36 million persons. The leaders of our people should not be satisfied with a less extensive program. Finally, it must be a living document—frequent revision will be necessary, requiring continuous evaluation of the tra-

ditions and aspirations of all the people. Our youth need a clear-cut statement of American ideals. To them it would be a stimulating and integrating influence.

The Local Community Must Attack the Problem of Developing a Harmonious Program Which Will Have the Support of All Elements

It will not be enough to bring together the various social and educational agencies for the purpose of eliminating duplication and overlapping of functions, and of providing more adequate facilities for education, art, recreation, guidance, employment, and relief. Conflicts must be confronted. The banker, the business man, and the politician will have to be brought into the discussion. To them, it should be explained in no uncertain terms, that to turn over to the schools money derived from taxes for the purpose of developing character, and then to teach young people, by the example of leading citizens, that the ability to "get ahead" is the real measure of success—that such a policy is incredibly stupid. The individuals and the groups who control the cheap dance halls, pool-rooms, and gambling places should be taken into account. There are also the motion-picture and radio, together with the problem of the conduct of adults in their private lives. And the social agencies themselves will do well to search their hearts to be sure that the cause they are working for is not the perpetuation of their own organizations, but the welfare of the people. Difficult as the task may be, the community must undertake the removing of the deeper conflicts encountered by youth—those contradictions between standards taught by school and church on the one hand, and on the other the more subtle and

pernicious influences in the realms of polite society, commercialized amusement, politics, and business.

Beginnings have been made in some parts of the country toward the development of the kind of program needed. Community leaders here and there are coming to see the necessity of a coöperative attack. While the motivation in many instances has come from a special interest in delinquency and crime, there is a tendency to approach the task at hand from a larger point of view. It is possible that these promising beginnings may lead to the kind of integration now required.

In 1935 in a small city of New England, the largest mill in the world closed its doors, bankrupt. Fear and desperation gripped the people. Their world had collapsed. Then leaders of vision rose up. The citizens responded with courage and faith. They raised several million dollars to buy the mill, and then attracted other industries to the city. The "impossible" was achieved. In a few months the city was remade—economically. For a far greater task in hundreds of communities—the development of the larger citizenship—the necessary faith and courage lie dormant.

An integrated program, says Joseph K. Hart, can never be developed save in a "city that is aware of its deficiencies and deliberately undertakes to see itself as a whole and to have a wholeness of pattern for its own living and for the education of its children. Life can be whole, that is healthy, nowhere but in an environment that is striving for wholeness."

Thus, we find a great need for a reformulation of American ideals, for a new devotion by all our citizens

to those ideals, for a new integration of social forces in their attainment under intelligent and vigorous leadership. Nothing short of the combined intelligence of the nation can cope with our present predicament, concludes the report on Recent Social Trends.¹¹ "Unless there can be a more impressive integration of social skills . . . than is revealed by recent trends," there can be no assurance that the suppression of freedom and even "violent revolution . . . can be averted." If the nature of the present crisis is explained to our young people, they will respond with vigor and courage. We have hardly tapped the spiritual energy of youth. To a large degree, our ability to avert catastrophe and bring about a day of social justice depends upon our utilization of this energy and courage.

¹¹ *Recent Social Trends in the United States*, pp. lxxi, lxxiv. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1933.

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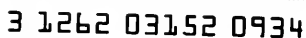
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